



Director David Lynch at work on Mulholland Drive

Mulholland Drive! Bandits! Twin Peaks!

Wrapped in Plastic

No. 55

\$4.50 US

\$6.50 CAN

**Laura Elena Harring &
Justin Theroux
Interviews!**

**Plus Harley Peyton
on Bandits, Twin Peaks,
and Buffy the Vampire Slayer!**



Wrapped in Plastic

Produced, written, and
edited by

CRAIG MILLER
and
JOHN THORNE

Contributing Editor

John Mitchell

Consulting Editor

Sandra Miller

Contributing Writers

Rick Kelsey

John J. Pierce

Los Angeles Correspondent

Nick Hyman

Canadian Correspondent

David Miner

U.K. Correspondent

Douglas Bogle

Technical Advisor

Chris Powell

Web Site Coordinators

Laura Thorne

Elaine Miller

Publisher

Craig Miller

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Front cover of Laura Elena Harring and Justin Theroux from *Mulholland Drive*; photo by Melissa Mosely © 2001 Universal Studios

Back cover of Barry Levinson and Bruce Willis from *Bandits* © 2001 MGM Pictures



WRAPPED IN PLASTIC, Vol. 1 #55, October, 2001. Published by Win-Mill Productions, 2117 Meserve St., Arlington, TX 76010. Phone (817) 274-7128 (until the phone company changes Arlington's area code some day). E-mail: editors@wrappedinplastic.com. Copyright © 2001 Win-Mill Productions, all rights reserved. Price \$4.50 per copy in the United States. One-year (six-issue) subscriptions (U.S.) \$29.00 (postpaid) (third class) or \$35.00 (first class), see pages 30-32 for foreign subscription rates. Published bi-monthly. Win-Mill Productions is not licensed by nor affiliated with Twin Peaks Productions Inc., Lynch/Frost Productions Inc., Capital Cities/ABC Inc., Television Network Group, Asymmetrical, Propaganda Films, Worldvision Enterprises Inc., New Line Cinema, or Fox Broadcasting Company. *Wrapped in Plastic* is a scholarly work of review and commentary only, and no attempt is made or should be intended to infringe upon the copyrights or trademarks of the above companies. Twin Peaks © Lynch/Frost Productions and Twin Peaks Productions. The X-Files © Fox Broadcasting Co. **Special thanks** to Laura Elena Harring, Justin Theroux, Harley Peyton, Jen Chamberlain (Universal Studios), Greg Olson (Seattle Art Museum), and Lisa Hurlbess (Artisan Entertainment). **ATTN, SUBSCRIBERS:** To avoid making any issues, please notify us of changes of address four weeks before you move. The post office will not forward copies of WIP. If you mailing label has an "X" before your name, this is your last issue! You should have received a subscription notice, but if not, send \$29.00 or \$35.00 (U.S.) now to renew your subscription and avoid missing an issue. **The number in parentheses on your mailing label is the final issue of your current subscription.** A "C" on the label means that this issue is a comp!

Justin Theroux Interview

He played director Adam Kesher in "Mulholland Drive."

Now, Theroux explains how the film had "too much quality and too much goodness" to be picked up as a TV series.

From our first viewing of *Mulholland Drive*, we knew we wanted to interview Justin Theroux. His odd portrayal of director Adam Kesher stands out immediately—starting down the sluggish executives in the meeting at Ryan Entertainment; pouring bright, pink paint into his cheating wife's jewelry box; talking to his secretary on the phone; meeting "The Cowboy" late one night; seeing Betty while auditioning actresses for his new film; rehearsing with Camilla Rhodes. Every one of his scenes is memorable, and Theroux's performance is a critical element to the film's quality.

In between his stage work, Theroux has appeared in *American Psycho*, *I Shot Andy Warhol*, *The Broken Hearts Club*, and *Romy and Michele's High School Reunion*, in addition to having a cameo role in *Zoolander*. His television credits include a starring role in *The District* last year and guest starring roles *Sex and the City*, *Ally McBeal*, and *Spin City*. Based on his work in *Mulholland Drive*, we're going to be seeking out his future work.

Craig Miller interviewed Theroux on October 24. Our thanks to David Pollick and Julie of BWR Public Relations for helping to co-ordinate the interview, and of course to Justin Theroux for giving us a generous amount of his time to discuss *Mulholland Drive* in some detail.

Miller: How are you doing?

Theroux: Hi, Craig. How are you? This is my favorite interview to date. I've been a fan of *Wrapped in Plastic* for a long time.

CM: Thanks. We'd heard from your publicist that you were a Lynch fan and sent off quite a few issues so you could see what we do here.

JT: Oh, I know exactly what you do there.

CM: Congratulations on some great work in *Mulholland Drive*. You play an unforgettable character in Adam. In *Tad Friend's* New Yorker article, he mentions how you turned down a role in *Wavelength* to be in *Mulholland Drive*, which now certainly seems to have been a wise decision. How did you end up getting the role of Adam?

JT: It was a little bit different from David's normal process, just because I was in New York. Months before I actually got the job, I was told to go and be put on tape for David, or David's people—this nebulous

thing. There were no sides, no audition, no acting involved; it was just go and answer questions. So I went to this casting director's office in New York at ABC, and they peppered me with standard questions—where are you from, what do you like to do, what do you read, that kind of thing.

CM: Was this Johanna Ray?

JT: No, no, no, this was someone else; I don't remember who it was. I just answered the questions pretty point blank, and then the tape went off in the cosmos, and I never heard back from them. I just figured, "Oh well, that was a total waste of time." And then approaching the time they were gearing up to shoot—it was literally a couple days before they started shooting—David had me flown out to meet with him. I just got a call saying, "You have to get on a plane tomorrow morning and go meet David." So I thought, "Oh God, something is actually coming of it!" But I'm sort of pessimistic. So I thought, "Nothing will come of this, but at least I'll get to meet David Lynch and see what he looks like," and whatever. I went out and met with him—I flew out that morning, early, early, and met with him. It was still morning in Los Angeles when I arrived. I went right from the airport to his house, and we just sat around, and we talked. We sort of talked around the script. We didn't even really talk about the script. He was showing me some of his photographs that he had done, and then he gave me the job at the end of it.

CM: Did you know you were being considered for the role of Adam?

JT: Yeah. I had been given the script and read the script. We talked a little bit about it at the end of the interview. He said, "I'd really like you to play this part," so I said, "Great. I can do that."

CM: Well, Adam is quite a memorable role. Naomi Watts told us that it seemed to her that everyone was confident that ABC would pick up *Mulholland Drive* as a series.

JT: I was the only one who was convinced it wasn't going to go. I remember getting very nervous, because everyone was very euphoric: "Of course it's going to go! *Tuán Peaks!*" And I was sitting there saying, "No, it's a different mood." You have to remember way back in 1998, whenever it was,

Friends was still doing gangbusters, and it was all about white people in Chardonnay, and interracial kisses, and all the rest of it. So I thought, "No, this isn't going to go. No way." I was ecstatic to be working on it. I knew we were making something of quality. But that was exactly the danger. I thought, "This is too much quality and too much goodness for it to make it onto such an awful medium."

CM: Even when it was in its original pilot form, what was so unique about it was that it was nothing like anything else on television. I think the New Yorker article quotes Joss Whedon and some other people basically saying that everything on television has been seen before, but *Mulholland Drive* was like nothing else. I can't imagine what the ABC executives were thinking when they saw it— "What in the world...."

JT: Yeah. The people—I'll try not to sound off as much as I did in *The New Yorker*—

CM: [Laughter] You had some great lines in there.

JT: Networks aren't geared towards finding new, interesting things to put on television. They're totally not about that. They're about creating Big Macs. They sit there and they think, "Okay, if we put more sugar in the special sauce, are more people going to scarf these things down?" That's what they do, and they're very good at it. But as the notes started coming down from the network to David asking him to change things, which he wouldn't, then I was extra convinced that, "Oh man, we're in hot water, because David's making up a gourmet meal, and they're making tubs of mayonnaise."

CM: At the time, did you hear much about the notes that David was getting, or were the actors kept a little bit secluded from the battles he had to fight the ABC?

JT: We were kept pretty secluded, but there was scuttlebutt on set. You heard, "They don't want you to smoke." We were all chuckling about that sort of stuff. I didn't take any of it very seriously. I just enjoyed it while it was happening.

CM: How easy or difficult was it to get back into the character of Adam when Lynch went back for additional shooting after the project had been lying dormant for so long?

JT: It was very easy, because David said, "It doesn't matter"—I was like, "I want to



see footage, I want to see what I was doing," because I had to refresh my memory. And he said, "It doesn't matter, doesn't matter, doesn't matter, doesn't matter." So I just said, "Okay." And we just went in there, and once we all got back into the costumes again and everything, we were all so happy to be putting a cork on the thing that it was pretty easy.

CM: Naomi had some worries that the project would just sit on the shelf indefinitely, and she was disappointed at one point, realizing that a quality work it was and wondered, "Is anyone ever going to see this." During that year that the project was dormant, did you worry?

JT: That's where my optimism came in, when everyone else was being pessimistic. I thought, "David Lynch can't shoot a couple hours of something and just have it sit there. It won't happen. It's either going to be released like a Pamela Lee video, or—I don't know what's going to happen to it." But I just knew it wouldn't decompose in a warehouse somewhere. I knew the actual footage was going to be used in some capacity. It would be on his Web site, or—I didn't know.

CM: People have often noted how Kyle MacLachlan was Lynch's onscreen "alter ego," but could Adam also be a kind of Lynch-like stand-in, particularly considering Lynch's experiences with *Dune*—and, it turned out, Mulholland Drive?

JT: That's the first question that any thinking person would have asked of David. I said, "Is this any sort of extension of yourself? Any reflection of you? Should I be studying your walk?" And he said, "No. Absolutely not. This guy is totally different. A different ballgame." I said, "All right." Then it simplified it down to questions like, is he a good director? Is he a bad director?

And he let me figure all that out on my own.

CM: There is the one line from the other casting director when Betty goes in for her audition—something like, "There's a hot, young director I want you to meet," or something like that. Isn't there a line in the original script that was cut from the film in which Adam says, during the meeting at Ryann Entertainment, "You don't want to lose me," suggesting that at least he thought of himself as a great director.

JT: Yeah, exactly. I contended that he was a bad director.

CM: Oh. [Laughs]

JT: Maybe he was a good director at one point, like when he got out of film school or whenever—he probably made one good student short. What happens to film directors largely is they're good and moralistic and interesting when they're fresh out of the gate for maybe not, but quickly, as soon as Hollywood offers them money, things fall apart. I basically followed that format of the previous arc that my charac-

ter probably had, which is that he got the key to the kingdom a little too quickly. So I took him as a guy who sold himself down river as quickly as possible. [Laughs] It was just the affectations that he had that were in the script—the car he drove, the golf club, anyone that would smash up a car after being told he couldn't cast someone—that's a pretty asinine guy.

CM: Some reviewers have described Adam as arrogant and bratty. Do you see him this way?

JT: Maybe that's too simple. The wonderful thing about a lot of David's films is that everyone's very human, and sometimes their flaws are larger than other people's flaws, but everyone has some sort of emotional or mental handicap that they're trying to work through. So bratty, sure, but I would say just more flawed. The thing about Los Angeles is that when you're living there, you start to believe the hype to a certain extent. It's an incredibly poisonous place for creativity, ironically and paradoxically, because it's supposed to be where dreams are made. But it's more often a place where dreams are ruined. So I think the character has believed what he's probably been told. It's the same for Betty or Rita—Betty in particular believes the hype of Hollywood, and it bites her in the ass.

CM: We've talked with a lot of actors, going back to the *Twin Peaks* days. A number of those actors lived in the Seattle area. Some have consciously made a decision not to move to Los Angeles, that a different mood takes over, and while it's a nice place to visit, some weren't wild about living there.

JT: I'm still trying to figure out what people like about Los Angeles. I've done long periods of time there working on other things. I describe it like this:

being in L.A. on a national basis—every day that I'm there hurts my feelings. The arts atmosphere in New York, particularly in theatre, and also in film and television here—there's something sort of Socialist about it. Everyone's pulling the same rope to have the same result. In L.A., everyone's pulling that rope, but they're trying to cut your hands off while you're doing it. There's not a supportive, artist-friendly environment there because of the way it's structured. In New York, talent exists above everything else, and then it trickles down from there. In L.A., money exists above everything else, and it trickles down from there. So you can see where it would become problematic.

CM: Do you see part of that as what Mulholland Drive is all about, and why Lynch specifically set the film in L.A.?

JT: I don't know. I mean, David's truly one of the most unplugged people in Los Angeles. You could sit there and say, "Here's Jim Carrey," and he'd go, "Who?" He

doesn't operate in that world. He's very fortunate in that producers come to him with money. He has to step to them a little bit, but for the most part when people come to David, they want a David Lynch film. He's not in the same boat as other people who are furiously peddling their scripts or going to the Standard for the Oscar night parties trying to pump as many flasks as possible. David is nowhere near that. So he lives in a Hollywood that's completely his own. So I think his take on Hollywood is more akin to what you see in the film, in that he doesn't really understand the backlot dealings in Hollywood. He's the way it should be, which is very cut and dried. "Do you want to make a film? Good. If you don't want to make a film, let's not. If we're going to make a film, let's make it a good film." He's the prototype of the way things should be run, in that the directors should be above the producers in so much of the work, and that the directors should come first, because it's really their idea, vision, and story that is being made. You hear horror stories, like the changing of the end of *The Scarlet Letter* where she's not killed, and you're saying, "What's the point?" if they're going to constantly be rewriting perfectly good stories in order to justify their own jobs.

CM: We were talking earlier about the character of Adam, and when he meets the Cowboy, the Cowboy mentions that one's attitude will determine how one's life will be. Did you see that as emphasizing that Adam has an attitude problem?

JT: Adam's obviously a smart guy, so although I think he understands what the Cowboy is saying on one level, he doesn't understand it on the second level, which is that perhaps the Cowboy is a good thing. This is a guy who could be giving him good advice on how to live his life, you know, aside from the thuggery of making him cast someone else. He says, "A man's attitude determines to a large extent how his life will turn out," or something like that. And he says, "Are you listening to me?" And then there's a pause, and I thought that Adam should be listening to just the text but not the message, so he answers in the affirmative, "Yes, I've been listening to you." The Cowboy says, "What did I just say?" I wanted to repeat the line back to him verbatim, like, "Yeah, I heard it," as opposed to, "Yeah, I understood it." So here's another place where the character just sort of misses, where an opportunity presents itself to be introspective, and again he becomes more outwardly concerned about his own a--.

CM: Mulholland Drive portrays film producers as virtual gangsters. Do you know if ABC took any offense at this portrayal?

JT: You can't help but wonder if they felt like they were being made fun of, and that's why they weren't happy having it done. I don't know. There's sort of an amnesia in Hollywood that takes place. You think of films like *The Player*, where Hollywood takes a beating, and people always think, "But that's them. That's the other bad

"David's making up a gourmet meal, and [the network] is making tubs of mayonnaise."



(l-r) Naomi Watts, David Lynch, Laura Elena Harring, Justin Theroux, and Ann Miller on location shooting *Mulholland Drive*

people in Hollywood. That's not me." It's wonderful when something can sneak in under the wire and make fun of the people who are funding it, because that is an awful circumstance, to have to ask for money to do things. Film is just an incredibly expensive medium. It's a shame that it is. But it's wonderful when that streaks in. But I don't know whether that had any influence on whether [ABC] canceled *[Mulholland Drive]* or not.

I would agree that a lot of producers—not all—are thugs. It's horrible. It makes me so sad when you think about things that artists have to do to get money. David's been very successful. I guess in the way he structures his contracts, or whatever, in being able to have the creative freedom he wants. But it's horrible—every film, every television show that comes out is subjected to these horrible tests nowadays. People—God knows who they are—screening groups, focus groups are the ones who dictate what happens. Oscar Wilde has a great quote on that. He said, "In the land of public opinion, there are no ideas." And it's true. [Laughter] Whenever I do something, and I hear, "The focus groups loved this, but they hated that," well who gives a s--- what they think? Who wants to make movies by committee? I want a really strong director who is the captain of the ship who is going to steer the thing wherever he wants without getting us all killed,

hopefully. It presents the possibility for greater failure, but it also presents the possibility for greater success.

CM: Obviously film is a collaborative medium, working with actors, the director of cinematography, et cetera, but there are some directors—Lynch, Kubrick, and a few others—in which their films are, as much as possible, independent, singular visions.

JT: Absolutely, which is a beautiful, beautiful thing. It's a real danger when actors or when producers think that they are the film, or they are the numero uno component. And actors are just as much to blame for this. It's a tragedy. Everyone except for the director is just a color on the palette and should be used at the discretion and the whim of the director. I've been asked, "Are you upset that your part's not bigger?" No, of course not. If the part was meant to be bigger, it would have been bigger. If it was meant to be smaller, it would have been smaller. It's like a big, elaborate clock, and you're one component in that clock, and if you're not there, it's not going to work as well, or work at all. But if you try and be a bigger part, it's going to be disastrous. It'll look like you're trying to be a bigger part, and it won't be the thing that the artist who is creating the whole thing was intending. You can see it all the time in big, commercial films, where it becomes about the star, or it becomes about the focus groups—it becomes this big, ugly,

sloppy, expensive mess.

CM: *Mulholland Drive* seems to be about a lot of things, one of which concerns identity, roles, control, and casting—of which Adam is right in the middle. What's your opinion of what the film is saying about these themes?

JT: Just from my character's point of view, I think it's about the illusion of power. I've had numerous experiences in L.A. where you walk into a restaurant, and people look up from their menus or whatever and immediately size you up as a big stack of quarters or a small stack of quarters. And obviously I'm a small stack of quarters, but there's this sizing up that goes on. Yet if I was Soleil Moon Frye and had been on *Punky Brewster* for ten years, I would have been a bigger stack of quarters. You're constantly being measured in Los Angeles. So there's that whole thing of, where do you fit in? What is your status? What is your worth? I don't mean in terms of what car you drive or whatever, but literally how you can help other people, how people can leech off you. There's this incredible amount of sizing up that goes on that doesn't happen anywhere else to the extent that it does in Los Angeles.

So there's that element. Then there's the other element, which is the people who go to Los Angeles to realize a fantasy. And I think that's different from realizing a dream. Realizing a dream is sort of like,

"I'm a kid from the Midwest, and I can hit a baseball really hard, so I'm going to go to the Yankees tryouts." That's realizing a dream, because there's something tangible in the intangibility. Realizing a fantasy is something totally different, and to me that's what Mulholland Drive deals more with. There's this girl who goes and has this bizarre notion of the way it works, and she's an incredibly weak-minded or mentally ill or just human person who is eaten alive—we found out that what she's really done is won a jitterbug contest. And on the basis and merits of that, she has gone to Los Angeles to try to become a huge celebrity. Ninety percent of the people in Los Angeles move there to become celebrities. They don't move there to become accomplished actors or accomplished screenwriters or accomplished anything. They move there to become a celebrity just because they want to see their face on Entertainment Tonight, or whatever. When you think about it, it's completely antithetical to acting. Acting is the ability to change roles and put on different hats and wear different outfits and assume the complete personality of someone else. By becoming a celebrity, you have just traded in all your stock in the ability to do that. Using Tom Hanks as the example, can you truly ever believe that Tom Hanks is a castaway and that he's on a deserted island? You can maybe fool yourself into believing that for a minute, but I would be hard-pressed to sit through that movie and not reference the time he gave this great Oscar speech, or the time I saw his great in *InStyle* magazine, or the time he's got buddies with Ron Howard, or whatever. We know who he is. We can't really believe him. The actors that I admire—Billy Crudup or Phil Hoffman or even [Robert] DeNiro, people who aren't out there hooking themselves in any colossal way. They're just quietly doing great work.

I think L.A. just attracts a particular kind of person that is not necessarily an actor, but they can somehow feel free to just say they are. It would be like me going to Florida and saying, "You know what? I'm an astronaut. Put me on a rocket ship." Acting is incredibly more technical than just being able to say you are it.

CM: In the last third of the film, names—and presumably identities—change. I'm pretty sure Adam is not named in this section. Did you see him as the same character as Adam in the first section, or do you think of him as someone different?

JT: No. Whether his name is the same, I don't know; I haven't even thought of that. I just assumed it was. I think Adam was probably that guy who, when Naomi's character thought of a bigshot director, she thought of Adam Keshot. It would be like

thinking of Quentin Tarantino. Whoever that icon is: "And then I'll get to meet X."

CM: The *New Yorker* article mentions that if Mulholland Drive would have been picked up as a series, Adam and Betty would have had a romance. Were you told much of this, about what would have happened to your character down the road?

JT: No, and as I'm sure you know from doing many years of *Wrapped in Plastic*, David does not give away anything, even to the actors. He'll answer perhaps rudimentary questions, but I would say, "David, where is this going?" And he'd go [in Lynch voice], "I don't know, buddy." [Laughter] That would be it.

CM: There have been different interpretations of Mulholland Drive. Was it all a dream? Was it partly a dream? Is Diane creating this fantasy world for herself in which she reinvents herself as Betty? Naomi Watts told us she had talked to someone who interpreted it as a dream by Don, the guy in the diner who had two dreams: How to you put it all together?

JT: After viewing it a couple times, I think—and big disclaimer, this is my interpretation—I think it is somehow this girl's weak-minded fantasy of what it is to be in Los Angeles and to be successful in Los Angeles, and we're then later let in on the reality of what her life is in Los Angeles. David billed it as "a love story in the city of dreams." I would agree that's that, but there's something much more. I always think of the girl who jumped off of the "H" in the Hollywood sign. I don't know what was going through her head when she did

that in 1930 whatever, the forties. I think Betty and she had something deeply in common. The film makes me very sad. It's beautiful at times; it's interesting. But I'm left with a deep sense of sadness after the film when I navigate it through my own set of personal symbols and my own opinions about Hollywood. I think that's the great thing about the film—you really can personalize it. There are many people who have just dismissed it as gobbledygook.

CM: But people are always dismissing Lynch's work that way.

JT: Yeah. It gets boring after a while. I can sympathize with Betty's character. Maybe it's just because I'm an actor and have been in Hollywood and worked in Hollywood, that there's this feeling sometimes when you're working on something, if someone had told me that I could be doing this at this age, and that this would be where my career was at. I'd be in a David Lynch film, or I'd be doing a TV show, or whatever. I would have jumped for joy at the age of fourteen. But there's this feeling when you're there of, "This is it? This is all? That's it? And I still don't feel happy; I still

don't feel elated?" There's a demystification of it. Now it's very hard to watch films, having been on set, and knowing that the boom guy's probably standing there, knowing what kind of light is hung where, which lens they're using, et cetera, et cetera. It's getting a bit off topic, but I think there's something deeply tragic. I see it all the time in Hollywood, where you'll see a celebrity, you'll be in some restaurant or wherever, and you'll see celebrity X come walking in, and everyone's heads snap around, "Oh my God," and some sort of trembling, aspiring actor or screenwriter is waiting on them, trying to make some feeble connection with them, and you think, there's something so sickly desperate about this situation in front of me. There's something that makes me want to burst into tears when that happens, because I sit there and think, "Why is that person—" I can imagine if John Updike walks into the room, wanting to talk to him, but why is it—

I mean, I'm going through it myself. Since the film has come out in New York, I'm being recognized pretty regularly now, just from people who have seen the film. There's something alarming about it for me, and there's something alarming about it for them. And I know exactly what they're feeling, because I've bumped into Robert DeNiro at the deli, and there's something demystifying about it. It is like when a dream comes to life. It's weird. So I think the movie plays on all these themes of celebrity, non-celebrity, desperation, satisfaction. It's so dense, and for me it's the most accurate portrayal of what Hollywood is. It's a much more sad place than you see on *Entertainment Tonight*. It's terrifying. That's why I don't make L.A. my home. As I said, it hurts my feelings on a day-to-day basis. They're making me feel bad about myself or overly good about myself, and the fall from that is horrible. If nothing else, Hollywood just wants to make me go work at a boarding school in New Hampshire teaching cross-country skiing or something, because it's so depressing there.

I always go back to that scene where Diane is masturbating, and I think, that, to me, is the most human moment in the film. She's in love with so much. She's in love with this girl, first and foremost. She's in love with what this girl has, which is celebrity. She's in love with this girl's life, which is money and a relationship with a director. And she's masturbating to that—to all of that. And she can't reach a climax. When I first saw the masturbation scene, I thought, ooh, masturbation, titler titler. But then when I really thought about it, I thought, God that is tragic. That is heartbreak on so many levels, that, if we are all honest with ourselves, could relate to it and say, yeah, I've been there, I've been heartbroken by numerous things. And the fact that she's unable to climax to her own fantasies is deeply moving and disturbing and sad. For me that's the scene that stands out the most.

CM: I suppose Lynch didn't give you any

"David does not give anything away. I'd say, 'Where is this going?' And he'd go, 'I don't know, buddy.'"



Lynch discusses a scene with Theroux and Harring

hints about what the blue box represented.

JT: That's one of those things where the cynic would say, "There's the McGuffin." But that's just one of those wonderful symbols that he gives you that's completely open to interpretation. Is it her subconscious? Who is the keeper of the box? Is it that homeless woman covered in muck? It's just one of those wonderful things you can read into. When I think about dreams, and the dream logic that follows, I think his movies do that in a wonderful way, but they're more accessible sometimes than your own dreams, because they're usually piggybacked onto some sort of narrative. So all that stuff—the blue box; the small, older people being absurd—all those are things that I love to let wash over me. If you get too hung up on them—"What's the key?"—you're going to bash your head against the wall. You're not going to be able to figure some stuff out.

CM: There seems to be something critical about the fact that Betty is not there when the box is unlocked; she disappears. The first hour and a half, or whatever, leads to this moment, and boom, she's gone!

JT: There have been times when I thought that it was her subconscious. We all have that little blue box in our heads which is the gateway to incredibly wonderful, incredibly dark, incredibly disturbing things. I do think that's a little blue brain that we as a voyeuristic audience get to enter into

and see what's really going on. I don't know. It's truly bottomless. I read something a while ago where David was quoted as saying, "The brain is a big, big, big, big thing." And I think David is trying to expand his own, and hopefully the audience's with him.

CM: What projects do you have coming up?

JT: I'm going to be doing this Ben Stiller movie with Drew Barrymore. Me and Ben are friends; we've been working on some stuff together.

CM: In the presskit bio, it said that the two of you were working on a Vietnam comedy.

JT: We've shelved that. Because of recent events, there's not much humor in Vietnam. I mean, you could argue that there wasn't much humor before! [Laughter] That's been put on hold. Vietnam was really just the backdrop, so we're maybe going to retool that. We've always been dying to do this rehab show, which we'd have to do on a cable network. I think I have a couple plays coming up here in New York and in Boston. I'm just doing whatever the next right role is. I'm pretty much off *The District* now—we separated. I have to do a couple more, just to give them a chance to get me off.

CM: Can you envision yourself doing another network series?

JT: I could. You know, it's so hard, because you always have to read scripts for TV shows with the mind that they're

going to get a lot dumber. [Laughter] So you sit there, and you think, "How could this get really screwed with?" They all do.

I don't know, I'm not in a position to choose roles. I still have to pay rent, and all the rest of it, so I still will take the next job that doesn't compromise me too much. I'm sort of at a crossroads. Some part of me says, I should just do plays for the rest of my life and live check to check. But then there's a part of me that says, maybe I shouldn't do that. There's this horrible paradox that in order to make money you have to achieve some sort of celebrity so that someone will give you money and give you a job, and then hopefully if you get enough jobs, you can then start choosing your jobs, et cetera, et cetera. I'm still in the place where I've got to take the next job, and if it's a bad job, I've got to hope it just doesn't register on the radar. You know what I mean?

CM: Every actor has some of those in his past.

JT: Sadly, you have to, unless you're a genius, and I'm not.

CM: People still hire Kyle MacLachlan, and he was in *Showgirls*.

JT: Exactly. I know. Unless you're a true genius, a [Federico] Fellini or a Lynch, you can't choose.

CM: Thanks for taking the time to do the interview.



Photo courtesy of Laura Elena Harring



Laura Elena Harring Interview

Her character in "Mulholland Drive," Rita, comes from "a world of trouble and danger."

Harring explains the difficulties of playing the role of a woman with one foot in that other world.

Laura Elena Harring stars in David Lynch's latest film, *Mulholland Drive*. Anyone who has seen the film knows that most of the actors in it play multiple roles. In the first part of the film, Harring plays Rita, a woman who has lost her memory after barely surviving a car crash. In the second part, she plays Camilla, a sensual but self-centered actress. Harring is superb in both roles, but it is in the part of Rita where she has the tougher challenge. Rita is an amnesiac who knows she still has much to fear. Harring's performance—in the movement of her body, the expressions on her face, and the tone of her voice—finds the perfect balance to convey both absence and awareness of identity.

When we interviewed Ms. Harring we had not yet seen the completed film version of *Mulholland Drive*. We had, however, seen Lynch's original cut of the ABC TV pilot (most of which is used in the final version and which comprises the first two-thirds of the film). Although handicapped by these circumstances we were still able to ask Ms. Harring about the challenges of playing Rita as well as the history of the *Mulholland Drive* project.

WIP editors Craig Miller and John Thorne spoke with Laura Elena Harring by phone on September 6. Our thanks to Carol Marshall and David at PMK Public Relations, and of course to Ms. Harring taking the time to talk with us. The interview was transcribed by John and edited by John and Craig.

Miller: We've read that you were a former "Miss USA." Did you start out as a model before becoming an actress?

Harring: For me it came naturally. The day I was giving up the Miss USA crown—it's so embarrassing to say in retrospect—a producer saw me and asked me to audition for a role. It was opposite Raul Julia in a picture called *The Alamo: Thirteen Days to Glory*. Funny enough, I represented Texas for the Miss USA pageant. I went back, and my first acting job was in Texas, for that role.

Thorne: How did you get the role of Rita in *Mulholland Drive*?

LEH: David [Lynch] casts very much

through pictures. Years and years ago I did a movie with Johanna Ray's son—Eric DaRe. He took me to the premiere of *Twin Peaks*. I met David there for the first time—the only time, actually. Ten years later I got a call from my manager saying David Lynch wants to see you today. Apparently he'd seen my picture, and I was perfect for the character. I said, "Oh, I can't do it today!" But I went the next day, and on the way over I was so excited to see David Lynch—I mean, David Lynch!—that I had a car accident. It was crazy. As soon as I arrived the executive assistant asked me, "Do you know anything about the script?" I said, "No." And she said, "Your character, Rita, has an accident in the first scene of the movie!" I said, "Oh my God! That is so weird." And I felt like that was an omen.

JT: Lynch has said that he believes in signs.

LEH: In India they call it symbology. It's just reading the signs.

CM: Other actors have told us that they don't audition for a part, but that Lynch interviews them. What was the interview process like when you met Lynch?

LEH: He just looked at me, and I could see from his eyes that he was looking at me through a lens. All he said for the first five minutes was, "Good. Good." So finally I just started cracking up! I thought it was hysterical. I knew then that he was quite a character. And then we just talked about India, because I've been to India. We talked about all these things. Mostly he

just wanted to see who I was. We had a lot of things in common.

Only in the last fifteen minutes did we talk about the character and the plot. He showed me the music of *Mulholland Drive*. As I listened to it I just felt it. It really affected me. You know how you feel something extra in the air but you can't describe it, an extra magic happening? There was that feeling in the air—sadness and mystery. I think it was at that point he decided I was right for the part.

CM: Was this music that Angelo Badalamenti had written for the film?

LEH: Yeah, exactly. Johanna Ray was in the room, and we were talking and philosophizing. As I was leaving, Johanna said, "He really likes you." And I said, "Good!" But I didn't hear back for a while. They told me I had it, but then it wasn't official: ABC needed to see screen tests of the girls. David made sure that none of the executives were there—it was just an artistic "make-up test," as he called it. I think he said that just to calm us down and not to make us nervous. It was a very relaxed atmosphere. Then, weeks later, I finally got the call that I had the role.

JT: You mentioned seeing *Twin Peaks* years before. Were you familiar with the series beyond the pilot?

LEH: I would catch some episodes. I knew it was a phenomenon and that people would get together and drink coffee and eat donuts. But I was watching it on my own whenever I could. Of course, Eric was there, and I wanted to see him. And I loved David Lynch. So I tried to see it as much as I could. But I saw more of his movies. *The Elephant Man* is one the movies that has most affected me. Not only out of David's movies but of all movies. Every time I see that film it just cracks my heart open.

CM: A number of the people from *Twin Peaks* whom we've spoken to have said that while they were working on the pilot they had doubts that something that unique was going to be picked up as a network series. What was the mood like on the set of *Mulholland Drive*? Did



Rita (Laura Elena Harring) and Betty (Naomi Watts)

you begin to doubt that ABC would air something so different?

LEH: No, completely the opposite. We were very sure of ourselves. After the phenomenon of *Twist Peaks* we thought there was no way it was not going to be picked up. They read the script and knew what they were buying. It just didn't make sense when we heard the call from ABC. I flew back from India to supposedly go to New York and promote the pilot. I called my manager and said, "I don't have a ticket here to go to New York. Where's my ticket?" And he said, "The series wasn't picked up." I said, "What?" I couldn't believe it. It was a shock to my system. And I'd spent all my money, too! [Laughter]

JT: There was a lot of anticipation for the series. It was going to be an event, and we were all surprised to see ABC pass on it. Did you hear anything from David Lynch at that time?

LEH: Well I heard the news from my manager but, of course, we stayed in touch. I kept seeing the omens and the signs that *Mulholland Drive* wasn't dead. And David kept saying, "It's dead in the water. *Mulholland Drive* is dead in the water, girls." I think he must have felt sorry for me: "Poor girl, she's in denial." But I kept seeing my character's name everywhere I turned, and I knew it was an omen. Then I saw Sheryl Lee at the spa, and I called David, and I said, "Something's going to happen. I don't know what it is, but it's not dead." He said, "It's gonna be on a shelf: nobody's will ever see it. If ABC airs it, it'll be two o'clock in the morning with no advertising."

CM: Since *Mulholland Drive* was originally produced for television, did you have any idea where your character would have gone had there been future episodes? Did Lynch tell you anything about what would have happened on the series?

LEH: He kept most of it to himself. The only thing I had heard that it was going to unravel and [provide clues] as to who Rita was. It was going to be similar to "Who killed Laura Palmer?" He had set the mystery up in the pilot. People were looking for Rita, and there was money in the bag. I thought Rita was from the underworld of L.A. But he never gave any clues.

JT: Although Lynch initially considered the project dead, at a certain point things had changed. When did you learn that Lynch wanted to turn the pilot into a feature film?

LEH: There were rumors before we got the

confirmation. But every time a rumor would start, it would fall apart again. Whoever was negotiating couldn't come to an agreement. We were on a roller coaster: it was going to happen, then it wasn't—it must have been at least five times. But in the end I figured there was a reason—*Mulholland Drive* was always meant to be this film. It's a big thing, the way that it has been received, not only in Cannes, but as the centerpiece in the New York Film Festival and in Toronto. From my understanding, David Lynch had never been invited to the New York Film Festival. His films had never been accepted there.

CM: The New Yorker article by Tad Friend

originally shot. It really is a different thing. **CM:** Because some time had passed between shooting the pilot and the new material for the film, was it difficult to get back into the role?

LEH: I slipped back into it pretty easily. I think that David has such a soothing, calming way of speaking and convincing you that everything is going to be all right that you just believe it.

CM: How long did it take to shoot the new material?

LEH: A couple of weeks. I was very lucky, and I really believe it is a miracle film because of the way that the new filming happened. To get all the actors together

again to re-shoot took a lot of scheduling and a lot of organizing. I was busy doing a movie, John Q, with Denzel Washington in Toronto. I'd fly in on a red-eye one day after filming, shoot my scenes and then fly out on a red-eye back. But then there was a glitch. For some reason the shooting had to be stopped for one day, but an important scene had not been shot yet. I was due back on the set in Toronto. But because of some rain in Toronto they postponed my scene one extra day. So I was able to shoot my scene with David. It was amazing!

JT: The first time you worked on the project it was for network television, the second time was for a likely R-rated feature film. Did there seem to be a different intensity or tone to the new material?

LEH: No. We had a love scene, and we couldn't have shot that for television. David Lynch's work is dark, and it is intense. Whether it is for television or for film, he's an auteur. His signature is on the film. *Mulholland Drive* was never a "pilot" to me. It was very much a film. And we always referred to it as a film. We never treated it like TV.

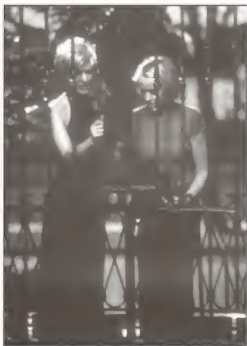
JT: I think that comes through in the pilot. It is not paced like television, and it is certainly edited without concern for commercial breaks.

LEH: Absolutely right. He always referred to it as a film.

JT: As you mentioned earlier, Lynch had edited different versions of the pilot—his original two-hour version, a ninety-minute edit for ABC TV, and a "Euro version" for release overseas. Did you see any of these?

LEH: I saw the [original] pilot.

CM: In The New Yorker article, Steve Tao quotes Lynch as describing *Rita* in this way: "She's not just in trouble—she is trouble." Is this how you saw the charac-



Rita (left), remade to "look like someone else," and Betty head off to Club Silencio.

explains that there were extra scenes shot way back when Lynch was doing the pilot so that it could be released overseas. Did any of these scenes make it into the new film?

LEH: Yeah, but he re-cut everything. He had the original pilot, and then he wrote an extra few scenes, and then he wrote another eighteen pages, and he re-cut everything. So the new film [contains] some scenes that were originally cut from the pilot and is missing some scenes that we



Rita sees a Gilda poster and takes her name from actress Rita Hayworth.

All Mulholland Drive photos © 2001 Universal Studios

ter?

LEH: David constantly told me that there was a black cloud hovering over me. People were looking for me, and I had this money, and the blue key gave me chills. There was this other world—something so creepy and so scary, but I didn't know what it was. I think that I came from a world of trouble and danger.

CM: A central theme of *Mulholland Drive* seems to be one of identity. Throughout the film we see actors switch in and out of roles. Your character, Rita, seems to have no specific identity and is in search of one. Was it difficult playing that kind of role? How did you approach a character who was essentially a blank slate?

LEH: That was very hard. People think that in a way that would be easier, but it's not. It's much harder, because we are always trying to categorize things. Our minds are very busy. To try to put your mind into blankness is a very difficult thing. With David's direction about the black cloud always over me and that I was terrorized but can't quite remember why, my body would just shake and tremble, and I'd believe it! I would come home, and I'd be nauseous, and I couldn't sleep, and I'd be shaking. It was very hard to play that tormented amnesiac.

CM: We don't learn much about the character's history. Did you create your

own backstory to aid you in the portrayal?

LEH: She had no backstory. You can't be in the mind for a character like this. If you are thinking and not feeling, then you're not there. So it was more of a feeling, of being terrorized—just a chilling feeling of danger.

JT: In past films, Lynch has created characters who go through transformations, whether it be mental, spiritual, physical—or a combination of these three. I was struck by the fact that Rita seemed entirely in the middle of transformation. We know very little about her previous life, and (in the pilot version) we don't know what she might become. Did you sense that she was changing?

LEH: I think all characters change because life is all about change. Not knowing who you are, you start clean. That's why I think there was much more of an innocence and purity to "Rita" than the character who is in the limo.

JT: We've talked with other actors who have worked with Lynch, and they say he is very exact about how he wants them to move and pause. Was he this way with you?

LEH: He is very specific. He knows exactly what he wants.

CM: Most of your scenes in the pilot are with Naomi Watts. Did you get to work with any of the other actors for the newer parts of the

film?

LEH: Yeah, I got to work with Justin [Theroux] quite a bit.

CM: *Mulholland Drive* was well-received at the Cannes Film Festival. What was it like being there?

LEH: People were clapping for, like, twenty minutes. We were all in a line and were so proud. At first they were clapping a little bit. They didn't go crazy at first. Naomi turned and looked at me and said, "Is that it?" So we stood up, and then the applause just went crazy. David peeked out from the line and said, "Laura, come over here and give me a big kiss." So I kissed him, and I was so touched that I started crying. I was so happy for David when he won Best Director. I could not believe how much they loved the movie.

CM: Did it seem like poetic justice?

LEH: Totally!

CM: Here was a film that ABC wouldn't even accept, and Lynch wins for Best Director.

LEH: It's amazing how the world works. **CM:** What future projects can you tell us about?

LEH: I'll be doing *The Vagina Monologues* in San Antonio in February. I have been very busy. I have some other projects that I can't talk about right now.

CM: Thanks for taking the time to talk with us.



Twin Peaks Lynch Fest 2001

By John Mitchell

All photos by John Mitchell except as noted



Wrapped in Plastic has been covering the Twin Peaks Festivals since 1993 (issue 77), and each year it gets more difficult to report in a new or innovative way, as the format of the gatherings has remained essentially the same. This year, I thought it might be interesting to have the photos tell most of the story. As such, the small amount of text here provides a mere outline. For the details, check out the pictures!

As is always hoped for when visiting the Great Northwest, the rains were present on a moody first day of the 2001 Twin Peaks Lynchfest that took place in North Bend, Washington, August 17-19. There is a distinct charm to this drizzly cloud cover that is unique to the locale.

The Festival registration took place in the Grange Hall in North Bend, just across the street from Mount Si Motel, holding a fantastic view of, well, Mount Si, better known to Peaks fans as "the Twin Peaks." If you ever try to climb them, you'll find they are not just beautiful from below, but from the top, as well as being real tor-

ture on your legs, butt, and back.

The coffee and donuts were nice, and what good would a Twin Peaks Festival be without them? As to the day's events at registration: lots of fans, a bunch of cool merchandise, and Twin Peaks jeopardy, in which several groups from various countries paired off in teams in an attempt to show off their Twin Peaks knowledge and win prizes.

After the registration, I returned to the hotel and called Don Davis (Major Briggs), who had labored greatly to bring his new art prints through customs (from Vancouver) to the festival for a "first ever" look for fans (see WTP 54 for more information about Don's artwork). Later we met up at the celebrity dinner and Q&A, which featured a meal catered by Kyle Twede of Twede's Diner (also known as the RR Diner in *Twin Peaks*) with his damn fine burgers and fries.

There was some great conversation, lots of interesting questions being answered by the celebrity guests, and a whole lot of autograph signing going on. Guests included repeat offenders Don S. Davis, Chris Mulkey, Jan D'Arcy, Catherine Coulson, Charlotte Stewart, Andrea Hayes,



At the Festival (counterclockwise from top): Charlotte Stewart (Betty Briggs), Jan D'Arcy (Sylvia Horne), Chris Mulkey (Mark Jennings), and Don S. Davis (Maj. Briggs).

and Michael J. Anderson.

After the dinner and Q&A came the gambling, a sort of "One Eyed Jack's" themed event. Lots of fun, but no real money was lost, which boded well with me, as I had already spent enough on this trip.

Saturday saw bus tours in the afternoon for those who hadn't seen all the filming locations yet or simply wanted to see them again. In the evening came the real fun, though. A visit to the Seattle Art Museum is always a pleasure, especially when Greg Olson is putting on a Lynch-related show (see his coverage of the *Mulholland Drive* premiere in the sidebar). This year's lineup included the Jack Nance documentary *I Don't Know Jack*, which



was executive produced by Richard Green (the magician in *Mulholland Drive*). Also in the lineup were some *Twin Peaks* out-takes (bloopers)

At left: Catherine Coulson (the *Log Lady*) with a fan (photo by John Gruber). Below: Michael J. Anderson (the *Little Man From Another Place*) (photo by Caroline DiGirolamo).



MULHOLLAND DRIVE AT THE SEATTLE ART MUSEUM

by Greg Olson with John Mitchell

The first Seattle preview screening of *Mulholland Drive* drew an overflow crowd on Monday September 24th, 2001, with many people lined up for at least an hour and a half prior to show time. With actress Naomi Watts and actor Richard Green making guest appearances there was a special buzz of excitement surrounding the event.

Since several people had signed up for tickets during the *Twin Peaks* festival in August, a number of those in attendance were from out of state (Wisconsin, California, Oregon, North Carolina, Illinois and Canada) despite nationwide fears of flying at the time. Also attending as a fan and member of the Lynch-mob was Jan D'Arcy.

Richard Green arrived first. Warm and outgoing with a butter-melting voice, and classic stage magician's arched eyebrows and Vandyke beard, it's no wonder David had to have him play a conjurer in *Mulholland Drive*. On his dark gray suit he sported a dark blue enameled *Mulholland Drive* road sign lapel pin used as an identification for the *Mulholland* team at the Cannes Film Festival in May 2001. He commented to me that his introduction for Naomi Watts would probably embarrass her.

Shortly thereafter, Naomi Watts, a diminutive woman with long, blonde hair (now a darker shade than in the film) arrived with her publicists. As she shook my hand she said, in a British-Australian accent, "David said be sure to say hello to Greg," to which I replied, "and

after that he probably said 'tell him to play the movie loud.'" She laughed, commenting that David "has strong feelings on that". Naomi was impressively down to earth and modest about her fantastic performance in *Mulholland Drive*. Throughout the evening she was good humored, extremely articulate and focused in expressing her thoughts.

When Richard took the stage, prior to the screening, he introduced her by saying, "You're about to see what I think is one of the best female performances in the history of the cinema." She joined Richard on stage, thanked the crowd for their warm welcome, hoped they would enjoy the film.

As the final credits were rolling, Naomi came up to me and asked, "What did you think of the film?" I replied, "I'm still drying my eyes," referring to the less-than-triumphant ending for her character, to which she said, "Awww." Richard Green then took the stage, did a bit of magician's business with his black cane and introduced Naomi again, this time to lengthy applause. The two then sat on the edge of the stage and fielded a few questions from the audience regarding the film. Due to the stunning effect the film had on everyone, very few questions were posed.

They both spoke of how easy it had been to tune in to David Lynch's creative wavelength, and how both had done their best work ever with and for him, how they had a strong sense of collaborating with a true artist. They stressed that David never told them a word about his interpretation of the film, either in terms of its overall meaning or the significance of individual scenes. David had expressed to them,

however, that he didn't want anyone to know which parts were shot for the ABC TV pilot, and which were new footage.

Naomi offered her *Mulholland Drive* interpretation, feeling the earlier parts with Betty are Diane's fantasy of how she wished things were – a sunny view, whereas her actual world is dark and crumbling around her – the whole film is what's flashing through her mind as she reaches for the gun. Richard said he felt that was his interpretation as well. Both hoped this would lead to better parts for them in the future, and knocked on the wooden stage for this.

In the museum lobby they signed autographs and graciously stayed for as long as fans wanted to talk. Not wanting to miss a chance at Christmas in September, I handed out *Mulholland Drive* posters, key chains and matchboxes provided by Universal Studios publicity. Naomi got to see the *Film Comment* magazine featuring *Mulholland Drive* for the first time and was thrilled by the photos and positive coverage of the film.

As the evening wound down, Richard took his leave, disappearing into the chilly, fog shrouded Seattle night. I asked Naomi if she would be interested in talking with me regarding David Lynch, for the book I am completing on him (*It's A Strange World: The Art Life Of David Lynch*, due out in 2002). Despite her tiredness after a long day of doing publicity she said, "I'd love to. I've definitely got some things to say about David Lynch." After seeing *Mulholland Drive*, let alone being a part of making it, who wouldn't? Well, perhaps David Lynch.

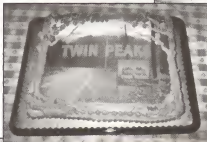
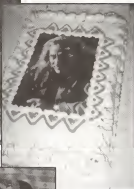
and a feature presentation of *Blue Velvet*.

On display that evening were the artwork of Don Davis, fabulous posters of David Lynch's movies, and lots of issues of *Wrapped In Plastic*, some of which were signed by David Lynch, Mark Frost, Everett McGill, Richard Beymer, and Grace Zabriskie. If they couldn't attend, at least we had them there in spirit (and ink). Also, Greg Olson had arranged with Universal Studios to hand out some fantastic 5" x 11" counter cards for *Mulholland Drive*, which made for terrific collectors items, as they were available only that night.

The final event of the Festival occurred on Sunday. The Cherry Pie Party took place just east of North Bend at a park that was the filming location for Theresa Banks's body as it floated down the river in *Fire Walk With Me*. While watching two rock climbers scale a nearby cliff, we also witnessed their girlfriends at the base of the rocks sunbathing in the nude, which amplified the excitement considerably. As in previous years, the wonderful cherry pie of Pat Cokewell (former owner of the Mar-T Café/RR Diner) was served up, much to everyone's delight. Eleven years after the cancellation of *Twin Peaks*, the Festival remains and will return in 2002.



At left: Andrea Hayes
(Heidi the waitress)



Below: two views of
the new clay
sculpture by Bruce
Buckford. (See WIP
49 for more of his
Twin Peaks-related
work.)



Above: the refurbished Tweede's Café (RR Diner)





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Harley Peyton Interview

Bandits, Buffy, and audio commentaries for the Twin Peaks DVDs!

This is our third interview with Harley Peyton. The first, back in WIP 17, discussed his work up through 1995—his film *Less Than Zero* and TV shows *Twin Peaks* (as writer and producer), *Route 66*, and *Moon Over Miami*. At the time, Peyton was in Fort Worth filming *Keys To Tulsa* and was awaiting the release of *Heaven's Prisoners*. The second interview appeared in WIP 29 and went into more detail about *Keys To Tulsa* and *Heaven's Prisoners*. As always tends to happen with Peyton, though, the discussions wander through lots of different areas—which is why we enjoy talking with him so much. This interview is no different. The intent was to talk about *Bandits*, the new Bruce Willis/Barry Levinson film that Peyton scripted, and then at the end there in a question about the audio commentary that Peyton did for the *Twin Peaks* DVDs. We did cover those things—plus, as you'll see, a whole lot more. We edited some of the discussion but kept a lot of the subtext intact, believing that our readers would find them interesting. They may not be directly related to *Twin Peaks* or David Lynch, but Peyton is interesting no matter what he's talking about. Enjoy!

Craig Miller interviewed Peyton by phone on October 29 (long after this issue should have been at the printer!). Our thanks to Harley for granting a generous amount of time.

Peyton: Oh hey, Craig. Can you call me back in twenty minutes? I'm actually on a treadmill watching *Buffy*.

Miller: Okay, no problem.

[About twenty minutes later:]

CM: So have you been watching *Buffy* on the FX reruns?

HP: Yeah. Now I'm actually catching up on the first couple of seasons.

CM: Tonight didn't they rerun "Innocence," the Joss Whedon episode in which *Buffy* and Angel finally—

HP: That is the one I just watched today.

CM: Tomorrow there's another great one,

"Passion." Until Whedon's episode "The Body" from last season—were you watching the show last season?

HP: Yeah.

CM: Okay. Well, until "The Body," I thought "Passion" was the best *Buffy* ever, and even now I think it runs neck and neck with "The Body."

HP: Wow! I don't know Whedon at all, but I read a quote from him once where if he could have worked on two series in the history of television, it was *The Simpsons* and *Twin Peaks*. *Buffy* is an amazing series. Particularly now seeing the first season, and having experienced how difficult it is, it's really tough to do the stuff that he's doing. You're basically talking about the same core characters, and you've got to keep telling stories about the same people—the longer term stuff. I mean, episode to episode, they've always got a new monster they can fight. It's *The X-Files* problem, too.

CM: Except that in *Buffy* there's more an evolution of character. In *The X-Files*, Chris Carter painted himself into a corner. The initial set-up was great, but then what do you do with the characters? You can't have Scully become a believer, because then it changes the whole dynamics of the series. So Carter had to keep things frozen in time for five or six years.

HP: Right. Exactly. And that's where it started to stagnate a little. And the thing about *Buffy* is that also there's so much more subtext to play with. It was the first show to do that. Now Roswell tries to do it, and *Alias* is trying to do it. But all that subtext—it's like watching "Innocence" today: what girl who has her heart broken doesn't think the guy's a demon? [Laughs] They play out the subtext so well.

CM: These episodes in the last half of the second season is when the series started to cool down. The first season had great episodes and terrible episodes, back and forth, but around the middle of the second season things started to pull together, and then in the third, it really started to hit its stride.

HP: Well, I'm a big Spike fan, so I'm

convinced. But yeah, it's just really, really smart. And somehow it makes more sense to me when she's says, "I've got to go to the prom, but first I've got to kill something." It's a little better than *Alias*, which is a show that I've been watching, when it's, "Oh, I can't be James Bond; I have to do my homework." No you don't! You're just James Bond. What's up with the homework stuff? Clearly they're trying to follow the template to a certain extent, and I think there's some cool stuff in it, but it's really hard. Obviously I watch a lot of television.

Anyway, I have a friend in New York, and she's obsessed with *Buffy* now. I get the calls every day because she sees the shows before me usually, watching on the dish: "Oh, you've got to see *Buffy* today. It was incredible!" Whedon's about as good as it gets in TV. I think he's really great.



Spike—back in his evil days—attacks Buffy.

Photo by Jerry Walk; © 1998 Warner Bros.



Terry (Billy Bob Thornton, left) and Joe (Bruce Willis) argue over Kate (Cate Blanchett) in Harry Peyton's *Bandits*.

All Bonetto photos © 2001 MCA Home Video

CM: I finally got out to see *Bandits* this weekend—

HP: Oh great!

CM: —after a week of trying to figure out Mulholland Drive, which I love.

HP: I actually sent a letter into *Salon* magazine, which had a huge exegesis of it, and I ended my letter by saying, "Hey, I still can't figure out what the chewing gum [in *Twin Peaks*] was about. Go figure." I'd love to know—and I haven't talked to David in years—but my guess is that it was a TV pilot that was for him moderately straightforward, and then when he made it a movie, I think that's when it became a dream. That's my guess.

CM: Right, right.

HP: There's no way that dream notion, including the suicide, is part of a TV show.

CM: No.

HP: And you can really see—people say, "She was supernaturally chirpy," the Naomi Watts character, "so obviously that was part of a dream." What are you kidding? It's Donna (Hayward) all over again, the Lara Flynn Boyle excess of innocence, which he loves to do. I certainly liked *Mulholland Drive*, but the *Salon* thing's hilarious. They did the same thing for *Memento*—the complete examination of every little possibility. The *Memento* thing was hilarious, because

I saw—or at least thought I saw—the director doing exactly the same things we did sometimes with *Twin Peaks*. That is, people assume that with every little inconsistency, there's some incredible plan that led to it. In fact, it's just something you missed! You get credit for something you didn't even think of. It's like naming Maddy "Maddy" after the character in *Vertigo*. Howard Rosenberg, who's a TV critic in L.A., wrote this long thing about, "Well, they named her Maddy because of this and that." Well no. We named her Maddy because we

liked the movie. Even in *Mulholland Drive*, the overanalysis is amusing on the *Salon* Web site. And the letters they got afterwards—and there's about twenty of them they published—are obviously from people who have given it a great deal of thought. So it's well worth looking at.

CM: Well I saw the film three times last week, and then *Bandits* was a nice change for the weekend. I liked it a lot.

HP: It's fun.

CM: It's gotten good reviews here. How has it done out there?

HP: It's done very well, generally. I would say that the one thing—and I've talked to [Barry Levinson about this a lot—is that he's held up to a different standard in a way, and because he didn't also shoot it like a comedy—he said, "It's a romantic comedy. Why are they jumping on me?" Some of the big-time critics—and the irony is, those are the ones I love to read—could be pretty brutal, primarily because they had certain expectations that weren't met by the movie, which I always think is sort of unfair. But generally speaking, it was

well received, and people really like it.

CM: I'd like to ask you about the beginnings of *Bandits*. The press kit is somewhat contradictory—both Michael Birnbaum and

Michelle Berk are credited individually with coming up with the initial concept.

HP: What really happened is that Michelle bought the rights to the lives of two bank robbers in the early seventies. And their M.O. was to rob banks like this. And there were certain anecdotal things—I had a huge file of documents—that in fact happened. For example, Terry running the

"Joss Whedon [*Buffy*]
is about as good as it
gets in TV."

drive-up window one day. So some of those things really did happen. What I said to them at the time—and this wasn't my time, this was like two years before—they were even talking to William Friedkin about doing it as a thriller. And I said, "Look, I think this is a great possibility for a romantic comedy. Let me turn it inside out." And I ended up doing so to such an extent that I changed their names. So Michelle had the rights to those stories first. She brought them to Michael Birnbaum. They partnered up. Michael's actually an old friend of mine, so he brought me in, and that's how it started.

CM: I noticed on the credits that it wasn't based on a book, but the story itself sounded very familiar, so I must have heard about the actual bank robbers at some point.

HP: One guy died in prison; the other is still in prison. So they are real people, even though it was changed a great deal.

CM: How far along had the story been developed when you were brought on board?

HP: It hadn't been developed at all. All I had were these documents. There was no story. All they really had was, "Isn't it great that these guys robbed banks, kidnapped people, stayed at their houses, and that they watched TV with them and everybody loved them?" That's pretty much all that they had to pitch to me. And I wanted to do a triangle romance, so I thought, "Well this would be fun." So that's really where it came from. As far as their characteristics, one guy was a bit of a ladies' man, and the other guy wasn't really the hypochondriac. That was really based on my own experiences in college, but he in fact did petition the warden to get fresh garlic. He was kind of a health food freak. And so again that's one of those little things that I could use. But pretty much all of it I made up after that.

CM: Did you bring the romantic triangle into the story?

HP: Yeah, I brought that in. One of them had a girlfriend, but there was no woman involved to this extent, and certainly no woman involved in which there was a question of, "Was she a hostage or wasn't she?" That was something I added in. At one point I just said to them—and this comparison doesn't necessarily help us—but what if Butch and Sundance both loved Katherine Ross? What happens? And then what happens if she wants them both? That was really the original idea, and in fact, there's probably less of that in the movie now than there was early on. The original notion was, "How do you write a romantic comedy where you don't know from the trailer which guy the woman ends up with?" What I wanted to do was, "What happens if the woman literally says, 'I want to be with both of you?' And as it turned out in the film, for various reasons, after that decision, she couldn't sleep with anybody, because she didn't know what to do, because she wanted them both. But in the original script—well, there was no *ménage* stuff going on—it really was about spending the night with one guy, and then

going to the other guy's room the next morning. That was something I was more interested in early on, but when the budget became what it was, and it became a big studio movie, a lot of those things were pared away.

CM: Isn't this your first feature film that was not adapted from a novel?

HP: That's a good question. Let me think. Yes, The Short answer is yes. Because *Less Than Zero* clearly was. *Heaven's Prisoners*. *Gold Coast*. *Keys To Tulsa*. So yeah, it's the first one.

CM: Do you prefer working one way or the other?

HP: Adapting is really fun, because I think it's easier, in a way.

The one thing that's hard for any writer is that, unless you work with a partner, you're sitting alone in a room, and you've got to come up with all the stuff yourself. And the great thing about having a book

is that you have a collaborator—it's the guy who wrote the book. And I enjoy that process. I really like sitting down and trying to reshape or find ways to put things on screen. But also over time you begin to realize that if you're trying to write whatever passes for your own voice, it's a lot of

direct it." And so originally I was going to direct the movie. The idea was that if I didn't, then certain things kick in. I become an executive producer, and essentially I get paid not to direct [laughter], which is not a bad job! And that's what happened. So that's why I have that credit. I never talked much about it when I was doing press, because Barry didn't know about any of that. In fact, it was when [Bruce] Willis came on that he said, "Look, I don't work with first-time directors." And that's when Val Kilmer was involved. So that was way back when.

CM: Speaking of Willis, how easy or difficult was it to get him and Levinson involved

in the project?

HP: The thing is, it started, as sometimes happens, in which a script is sitting on a shelf. Propaganda wasn't going to do anything with it. My agents, who represent Val Kilmer, gave it to

him. And Val loved it and said, "I want to do this, but I have to get to know this guy if I'm going to let him direct me." And everyone's heard the stories about Val Kilmer. They may or may not be true. I spent about three months basically just hanging out with him. We didn't even work on the script. We just spent time together and listened to music and talked about things generally and really had a great time. And so we started to think what our dream cast would be. Val said, "Cate Blanchett's got to play Kate." And this was before, obviously, she even knew about the project, although he apparently cornered her at Cannes one year to try to tell her about it. He said, "Look," and this is because I suppose movie stars can call each other, "I'll call Bruce. I don't know him, but I'll call him and give him the script." He gave Willis the script on a Friday, and on Monday Willis called up and said, "I'm in." And about ten minutes later I was, in the director sense, out. But I didn't really mind. I mean, just the chance to have that kind of cast, and to know what would happen, made me very happy. The odd part was that Bruce was originally going to play the Billy Bob [Thorn-ton] part: Val was going to be the straight man.

And then before Levinson came on, MGM came on, and then Val led the project, and in all honesty I still don't know why. Not by the way, based on his own volition. He didn't suddenly say, "I don't want to do it." It may have been because of his price; I just don't know why. In fact, I kept trying to call him. He was making that *Mars* movie. I wanted to say, "Look, I don't know what's going on, but you should call your agent." But at any rate, suddenly Bruce had called Billy Bob, because Val was no longer involved, and so Bruce brought Billy Bob in about the same time that Levinson came on. Part of it really is, when

"[Bruce] Willis [got] the script on a Friday, and on Monday [he] called up and said, 'I'm in.'"



Bruce Willis

fun to just be able to sit down and come up with it on your own. That's why this experience was so great for me, and why at the moment I shy away more from adaptations.

CM: I noticed that you were also credited as an executive producer. What was your role in this regard?

HP: Well, it's because when they came to me—and this was a long time ago—it was then a Propaganda Film. I said, "Look, I'll do it, and I'll do it for a cheaper price if I can

Bruce Willis wants to do something, suddenly there's this huge freight train that's on the track, and it's amazing how quickly it works, and also I think how well he uses that kind of power. He was great to work with in that sense, and he was really good about the script. That was a pleasure. And once Barry comes on, then even better, because I never got a note from the studio. I never had to do anything but talk to Barry. So once he came on, then everything starts rolling. It's one of those very lucky circumstances that does not happen very often.

CM: I have a roundabout question here. The basic question is whether you see Kate Wheeler as a likable or sympathetic character?

HP: I really do. Early on, when I was talking to Barry about who could play the part, because Cate had not committed, at some point they were saying, "How about Angelina [Jolie], because we had Billy Bob. Why don't we just ask him to ask her?" Because so much of this was based on friendship. Bruce and Billy Bob had wanted to work together since *Armageddon*, and the notion of doing a buddy movie together, they loved that idea. I kept saying, "Look, this woman is making—" and again, it was a little bit more in the movie than it was ultimately, but I always felt that if a woman was making a decision to want to be with both guys, if it comes out of sexual appetite, then the movie doesn't work, because I think in some sense she is either not sympathetic, or it's not the same thing as if she makes that decision out of a kind of eccentricity and a kind of innocence. So what worked for me, and the reason I was so happy to have [Cate] do it, was that she was able to project that innocence and eccentricity in a much different way than Angelina. If it was Angelina, then you could just imagine, "Well, of course, she wants to f--- more than one guy." And that, to me, was different. So I always was very happy with what Cate was able to do.

CM: The reason I ask is because I thought the chemistry between Willis and Thornton was spectacular, and then Wheeler enters the picture and throws things off balance. Of course, that's part of what the character is supposed to do, but sometimes I just wished she would go away. Is this the reaction you wanted from the audience, or was I over-reacting?

HP: No, that's just a reaction, and it's a perfectly fair one. One of the problems that we had is that there were two stories that were being told here, obviously. There's the story of the three of them, and then there are the bank robberies. This was a very long script. That was one of the biggest things I learned from this project, that if you're trying to take a very long script into production, it's one thing to say, "Yeah, great, we can shoot everything anyway; we've got the money," but when there's a battle afterwards about how long the movie's going to be—and Michael Bernbaum to this day insists that the two-hour, twenty-minute version was better, simply because

it gave you more time to, for example, understand her motivations. And obviously when you start looking for cuts, the character stuff is cut first. You can't cut the story stuff, or the story won't make sense. And I take the blame for a lot of that, because the script was simply too long, and the irony of that is that when I first went to work for *Twin Peaks*, I'd never used a computer. And Mark [Frost] said, "We

cluded, would react that way. However, by the way, those two guys are so great together—

CM: Yeah. Part of it may have been the cut scenes, but for me, I just wanted to see Willis and Thornton on screen, because the first twenty minutes or so is just magnificent. No matter how great Kate was, or what I would have thought of the character, the opening is great. It's perfect. And



Terry and Joe rob a bank—but they remain pleasant.

have a deal with Macintosh, so here's your computer. We all work on a computer. And by the way, we don't use Courier here as a font; we use this font called Garamond." Let's say you write a script in Garamond that's a hundred twenty-five pages. You're really written a script that's a hundred thirty-eight pages.

That's not a problem when you're in development so much, because my stuff tends to read pretty quickly. But the stuff of the matter is that we had a script that wasn't a hundred thirty-three, or whatever it was, it was really a hundred forty-five. And that was because of Garamond. And I've never used it since, because I realized that it's one thing to be theoretical when you're in development, but when the movie really gets made, that was real heartbreaking, to have to try to cut that stuff away. It was hard for everybody, including Barry. A lot of the stuff that was cut—and there

are specific scenes I can think of—were really about Kate's state of mind. When you knew more about her state of mind, among other things her decision might not seem quite so abrupt or one that was made without thought. I haven't thought about this that much, but my guess is that that might be why some people, yourself in-

anything brought in would have taken away from the screen time of those two together. They worked just perfectly together.

HP: Yeah. It's tough to compete against that. And they were great together, and they had a ton of fun on set. I've never been on a set that was more fun and more relaxed. And Barry had a lot to do with that, because he runs a very relaxed set. But you could see it every day, the way those two guys were working. When I was a kid, my favorite movies were the road pictures. Bruce and Billy Bob really were wonderful. There's no question that, while I really love the Kate stuff, that's the stuff that really works the best.

CM: I got the sense that some of the Willis/Thornton material—particularly during the interview scenes with Bobby Slayton—was ad-libbed. Was any of it?

HP: That's interesting. Did they ad-lib? Yes. One of the things that Barry

does is when he rehearses a scene, he pretty much gives as much free rein as the actors want at the beginning. And then he'll pick the improv stuff that seems to work the best and keep the part of the script that seems to work the best. I mean, there were day players who had the freedom to improvise! And it made everyone

"Hey, I still can't figure out what the chewing gum [in *Twin Peaks*] was all about."

better. In the end, while there wasn't as much improv as it sometimes feels—for example, the Bobby Slayton stuff, we went to this house, and they had the cameras, and they said, "Okay, let's just start doing interviews." I was sitting on the sidelines scribbling up stuff for them to say, which is not to say that they didn't improv some of that stuff, but like, talking about Lewis and Clark, and Al Clark, and that whole thing, was something that I just wrote.

CM: Really? That was one of the things that I guessed was probably ad-libbed.

HP: No, that I wrote. I wrote it and handed it to them, and particularly because we were doing it on the fly that day, I could hand them that, and then they would start to run with it a little bit. I'd write a page and a half, and they'd do three or four pages. There were very specific points that we wanted to hit. We need something about Kate. Let's do something about friendship, or bank robbers, or about the whole notion of Billy Bob and fear, and his nickname in prison. I would write all that stuff, and they would run with it.

CM: The movie has a great soundtrack. How involved were you in getting the songs chosen?

HP: Not a great deal. In the original script, the thing that brought Bruce and Cate together was the fact that he was from Philadelphia, and she was a Philly soul freak, so in the original script there were a

lot of O'Jays songs and Harold Melvin

songs, and I never do this when I write scripts, but in this script, I actually wrote songs for transitions and put them in, all based on this Philadelphia soul canon. Barry loves music, and it's always an important part of his movies. Cate came up with the Bonnie Tyler stuff. And it expanded from there.

CM: I also loved the dialogue between Kate and Joe about "Total Eclipse of the Heart." Was this a debate you heard first hand, or

did you make it up just for the movie?

HP: That's interesting. The "Total Eclipse of the Heart" part was probably the scene, more than any other, where when they got down to the day's shooting, they were having problems trying to get the thing to work. Michael Birnbaum was calling me from the set and holding up a cell phone and going, "Listen! Listen! They're making the movie!" And that was a day where, whatever they were doing, they were having trouble making it work. We had started with the "Total Eclipse of the Heart" thing, and her speech, and the chick's song stuff, which I had all written. But then Bruce and Cate started to figure out other ways to approach it. For example, his whole thing about the song "Wildfire," that's all Bruce. So that scene probably has more improv stuff in it than any other scene in the movie. And I remember seeing the dailies of it and saying, "Wow, they just nailed it."

CM: Of all the scenes with Kate in it, that's my favorite.

HP: That's the best one by far. You know, two people bonding over a song is not the freshest idea in the world, and they really made it work. That's what I liked about it. It felt very real, and it was a really nice

idea that Joe and Terry are "performing" for the police watching the Alamo Savings and Loan security cameras in the bank. I wrote these specific events in the past few years that inspired you in developing these themes?

HP: In the original script, there was a little more of the Darren character. What I wanted to do with him originally was, I liked it as a device because it was a good bit of shorthand that would allow him to describe certain things, like the frontman, and ways that they robbed banks, and things that they did. But as far as being inspired by other events so much,

maybe unconsciously, but certainly not something that I thought about. What I wanted to do, more than anything else, was start out with a guy who's fairly familiar, which is the tabloid guy, and then make him a part of the story in the end. In the original script it was different, because as the story became more and more important, I had a cut late in the movie where it cuts to a network news bulletin. It's Tom Brokaw talking about the Sleepover Bandits. But he's talking about it as if it's a kind of kooky story out of California that has no real weight or meaning and is just this bit of silliness. After that you cut to Darren Head in a bathroom drinking a vodka saying, "He stole my story!" And there was a point where Joe and Terry then come to him, and it's his chance to get the story back. That was in the original, but again it was one of those things that we just lost along the way, which I actually regret a little bit, because I like that better. It wasn't necessarily about length, I don't think; Barry just didn't want to go that direction.

CM: Was there any problem with getting Brokaw to play along with it?

HP: As we learned in trying to put together some of the clips, you can't get anybody any more, because the CNN people got in such trouble for Contact that no legitimate news guy will do it any more. God knows, I never expected Brokaw to do it. I thought, "Can't we just call him Brokaw and have a lookalike?" I think that was probably the main reason Barry went away from it—you couldn't really do it. The only guy in Hollywood who will do it is Larry King, for reasons we can only guess at. You can't really get news guys to do it; you can only get entertainment reporters.

So we cut a lot of that stuff, and unfortunately it then begins to feel more like a cliché. One thing I've learned is, be careful about taking clichés and thinking you can twist them or make them more interesting, because they're still clichés. Sometimes that can hurt you, like Kate singing badly at the campfire. I love what she did, although it was cut down in the final movie, but I realized later that was a mistake. Don't get lazy and think, "Yeah,

"They just kept waiting for the [Audrey Horne] cherry stem story."



Terry and Joe rob a bank.

lot of O'Jays songs and Harold Melvin songs, and I never do this when I write scripts, but in this script, I actually wrote songs for transitions and put them in, all based on this Philadelphia soul canon. Barry loves music, and it's always an important part of his movies. Cate came up with the Bonnie Tyler stuff. And it expanded from there.

CM: I also loved the dialogue between Kate and Joe about "Total Eclipse of the Heart." Was this a debate you heard first hand, or

moment.

CM: The media play a major role in the film—not just in the obvious Criminals at Large segments, but in Joe and Terry's understanding that, the more well-known they become, the crimes cannot be done the same way—not just because people will recognize the bandits, but the dynamics of the crimes themselves, how the bandits relate to the victims. Eventually the bandits then use this media exposure as a tool in their favor. In retrospect the viewer real-

but it'll be cool. I'll balance out the weird stuff with these familiar elements." But the problem with familiar elements is that they're familiar. [Laughter]

CM: How much of the cut stuff was filmed and cut in the editing room, and who much was not filmed at all?

HP: Of the stuff that was cut, most of it was filmed. A lot of Darren Head stuff was cut prior because Barry didn't want to spend a day shooting that stuff. Anything that had Bruce or Filly Bob or Cate in it, he was more than happy to shoot, and he had the budget ability to do it. And I'd love to see the two hour, twenty minute version.

CM: How much might be popping up on a DVD later?

HP: I'm not sure. I did the DVD interview, and I know Michael

Birnbaum is very big on fighting for seeing some of the stuff that was cut, including a lot of the interview footage that they didn't end up using. So it will be nice if they did that. The guys who did the DVD seemed really good at what they were doing. Although it blends for me, because I did the *Twin Peaks* one the same week, just by coincidence. Those guys are great! They've done *Magnolia*; they've done some really cool stuff. And they really impressed me. That was really fun. So I might get the two confused. But yeah, I think some of that stuff could turn up on the *Bandits* DVD, although MGM isn't known for making great DVDs. Although these guys who were hired by MGM are determined to break the mold on that, so I will be very curious to see what they do.

I know more about the *Peaks* one, something about David having a Web site, and there's a red curtain, and you have a code word, and the curtain will open. David has nothing to do with the DVD—he's going to have a tangential involvement. And those guys talked to me about *Wrapped in Plastic*. I mentioned to them the stuff you guys had done about how things were shot that were different from the scripts. And they thought, "That's cool." Those guys were open to all sorts of stuff. I'll be very curious to see what they do.

I got the feeling when they were doing the stuff with me that they had already made the decision to try to talk to the director of every episode. David wasn't available, and they would have Mark for the interview you guys did with him for an overview. That seemed like their idea at the time. In fact, at that time I think they were trying to run down Tina Rathborne, because she was one of the directors.

CM: I think they ended up getting Caleb Deschanel, too. So you did the audio commentary for the third episode?

HP: I did it for the third and for the sixth. It's weird, because you're there, and the camera's on you for some reason. They're playing tapes of the episode with the sound



Willis and Thornton with director Barry Levinson

off. It was an interesting process. They clearly had certain things they wanted to know and questions they wanted me to answer, and they kept just waiting for the cherry stem story, because that was a goal for them. It was funny. It was difficult at first, but it was also a lot of fun, and I just kind of blabbed on. And there was a lot of stuff that was about the second season, but of course they're waiting for that.

CM: I have a question about the *Bandits* presskit. Why is your bio only three lines long?

HP: This was me being stupid. This was a bio I did a long time ago. My bio used to say, "Harley Peyton lives and works in Los Angeles," because at some point in my life I thought that was kind of cool just to do that and nothing else! And actually Michael Birnbaum said, "You can't do this! There are Golden Globes, and they need to read this stuff," blah blah blah. But it was too late. So yeah, although I did the press tour, my presskit bio was rather short! That's my fault; that's no one else's.

CM: I just didn't know if there was some reason you didn't want to give them any more information.

HP: No, there certainly wasn't. This was very early. It was probably before the movie even started. Someone probably called and said, "Just fax us a bio," and I went, "Oh great," and that was the littlest I could do.

CM: So what do you have coming up next?

HP: I'm doing a couple of things. I had a project at Dreamworks that I was working on, a *Strangelove* kind of comedy about a government lab that had worked out a bacterial agent that lowered your IQ by half. It was a romantic comedy about two people who were too smart for their own good or to be together, and obviously the bacteria plays into their relationship, but also into a larger story of intrigue in Washington. Needless to say, it suddenly became very difficult to do a script where the big finale is the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Supreme Court, and the President are

all gathered at the Mall in Washington on July 4, and they're going to be dosed with a stupid bacteria. We were talking about it, and I had already done several rewrites, but thanks to September 11, we're just going to file it away for a while.

So I'm moving on to a second script, also for Dreamworks, which is a remake of a French movie called *Kings for a Day*. The French movie is about two Polish guys after the Berlin Wall falls who decide they're going to go to Paris to find fame and fortune. They find nothing but comic failure—and this all happens in five minutes. They're about to go home with their tails between their legs, and they're mistaken at the airport for an arriving cult and very unknown Icelandic film director and his interpreter. And they go to a film festival and pretend to be the director. Nobody understands Polish anyway, so they think it's Icelandic. It's the kind of festival where there are four hour movies about three-legged dogs from Iran. So it's both a parody of the film festival life and about identity. Actually I just had a meeting today to start it, so that will be the next thing I do. I'm real happy about that. And then there's an idea I have that Will Smith wants to do. I'm going to try to do that as well. So there's a lot of fun stuff happening, and *Bandits* obviously was a big help.

CM: I was going to ask whether, being involved with a Levinson/Willis project, do you get a lot more calls now?

HP: Yes. That's the biggest change, I suppose. I hadn't done any Dreamworks projects before *Bandits*. Although that was really about people reading a script. The benefit was really done primarily by the script itself, which people really liked, and so that really helped me. And the movie coming out, too. Listen, there are certainly people who just go, "He wrote that movie, and they're in it, so let's just get him." That's less interesting in it's way, but it certainly helps. It's been great for me. I have no complaints about that.

b
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Letters

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o

WRITE TO US AT:
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P.O. Box 1283
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(Letters may be edited for
space and/or clarity)
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Dear Craig and John,

I just picked up a copy of the excellent WIP 53 from the stands. I was delighted to see you take on the final episode, as well as promise to take on the Red Room in general in 54. I'll not go on at length with my various nitpicky opinions, but I do wish to submit my thesis that an analysis of the Red Room is incomplete without reference to the so-called "astral plane," as described in various esoteric traditions, as well as by practitioners of the technique of "astral projection."

Evidence for this assertion is best embodied in a text like Robert Monroe's esteemed *Journeys Out of the Body*, in which he describes his rigorous experiments and explorations on the astral plane. One is compelled to conclude that his experiences characterize not hallucinations or even dreams but an objective realm with curiously subjective characteristics, paralleling Lynch's description of the Red Room as a place that "changes depending on whoever walks into it." Even casual research can reveal a wide range of reports from the astral plane featuring strange time compression/dilation effects, encounters with the deceased or fantastic, and the rule of "dream logic," all of which can be seen in the dynamics of the Red Room. But, for my money, the most telling feature of all is the mood or "vibe," an unmistakable feeling which other readers may have experienced in association with lucid dreams, out of body experiences, false awakenings, anesthesia, etc. Although I am not an experienced astral projector (projectionist?), I have had several of the experiences from an early age and can vouch that there is an electrical charge to the air, a prevailing sense of awe, of looming potential, and of deeply resonant layers of meaning. And I conclude that it is this mood that Lynch was aiming to recreate in his design and production of the Red Room.

Further correlations on this subject are best left to individuals' interests, but I believe that it is a fruitful area of research for scholars of Twin Peaks vis-à-vis the show's "supernatural" elements.

Seofon

Mill Valley, CA
e-mail

Interesting observations, Seofon. We'll admit that we are not experts in the study of astral projection (do our odicopies of Strange Tales and Dr. Strange by Steve Ditko, Gene Colan, and Frank Brunner count? Didn't think so). Your description of "an objective realm with curiously subjective characteristics" with "the most telling feature of all

[being] the mood or 'vibe' sounds, on the face of it, contradictory, though we can't deny that this is pretty close to the effect that much of Lynch's work has.

In any case, Seofon wrote us again with this follow-up letter:

Dear WIP,

I picked up WIP 54 a few days ago and have read through the Red Room article several times. Your article touches a few points that I had not considered, and at the same time made me realize that I am quite attached to my own interpretation and am not likely to abandon it for fear of some sort of psychological crisis. I think that our opinions are ultimately harmonious, I but also stand by my assertion that a study of "astral physics" is enlightening vis-à-vis the Red Room.

Before going further, I should state my interpretation of your thesis, that:

(1) There is a question—produced by a difference between Lynch's and Frost's visions of the Red Room—as to whether it is a place that can be accessed physically or only psychically. (2) Notwithstanding this issue, the Red Room is representative of a transcendent reality in which the psychic is made manifest, most notably in the form of "divided selves." Let me also say that I'm aware that discussing this as an academic subject is inherently absurd, and all I'm ultimately trying to do is encourage you to check out something like Monroe's book.

With regard to point (1) above, I had not previously considered or noticed a change in the way in which the Red Room was represented in the series, so your points here are new and interesting to me. I agree that for Frost the Room becomes tied into the philosophical architecture of the Lodges, while for Lynch the Room simply sprang Athena-like from his head and remained an instinctual image. For this reason alone I am inclined to attend only to Lynch's vision vis-à-vis interpretation of the Red Room. But, even beyond that, I think the differences are more a matter of wordplay than substance.

In your analysis of the quote from 2020 on page 6, you equate tangibility with physicality as evidence for Frost's vision of the Lodges as physical locations. This makes common sense but is tricky unless these terms are defined. I do not agree that they are identical. While I am by no means of scholar of Alice Bailey or Dion Fortune, I have read some of Fortune's writings in which she describes experiences which, while not occurring in the objective world of space and time, were certainly not lack-

ing in tangibility. Lucid dreams, and even some garden-variety ones, can create fully convincing sensory environments. So if the question is not the subjective experience of the thing, then it must be whether it produces any effect in the objective world of matter. (After all, regardless of the mechanics of everything, Earle would have no interest in attaining mastery in the Black Lodge if it did not guarantee him control over the physical world.) One could argue that Lodge-related events have material effects (e.g., the Giant takes Coopers ring), but it is easier to argue that such events have real-world psychological effects, and it is not hard to see how such effects (e.g., a Bad Coop) could have repercussions the physical world that are real in every sense of the word.

Astral projection was not unknown to Dion Fortune, and experiences like the ones I refer to above fall squarely under that rubric. It is also worth noting that in the Gnostic tradition (of which Fortune was a scholar) the astral plane is called "Yesod," meaning "foundation," suggesting that the astral/dream world is the foundation of the physical world and not the other way around. Given all this, it seems that the Room/Lodges can be tangible without being strictly physical and do not so much "intrude" on reality as "show through" at prime points in space or in consciousness.

Thus, I see the split between Lynch's and Frost's interpretation of the Red Room as mainly a semantic one. I don't think that Lynch disagreed with the White Lodge/Black Lodge architecture, but for him it was subsumed by the overarching "otherness" of the Red Room. It just became a matter of how the metaphor worked: Frost wanted the White/Black Lodge to be represented in the physical environment, but Lynch wanted it to be represented by the characters and action while the environment simply represented otherness. Indeed, it is easy to see how the visual excess described in the original script would have detracted from the important things going on with the characters. By limiting what was going on in the environment, Lynch shifted the focus of attention to the characters and brought home the point that the White/Black Lodge is not so much a matter of "where you are" as "what you're being."

I agree with your conclusions in all other respects but would just take it the step further that it is possible to cross-reference these conclusions with an existing body of knowledge. Robert Monroe's classic "Journey" trilogy alone describes

instances of encounters with the deceased, possession of another's body, psychic attacks and injuries, obtuse but helpful entities, Doppelgängers, and environments that can only be described as surreal. This is not to imply that Lynch is a student of or even aware of astral anything, but that, whatever it is, he is (not surprisingly) well-attuned to it.

Two more notes:

(1) The astral is not spatially limited in the way that the physical is, but at the same time is necessarily accessible to our senses. Lynch does a brilliant job of representing the Room as a place of vague limitation. The floor is decidedly non-floorlike and suggests a higher energetic state, as does the red color scheme, while it is on record that Lynch likes curtains because they have the ambiguity of con-

cealing and revealing.

(2) I read Cooper's error in the final episode's Red Room sequence as that he confuses Annie and Caroline. He cannot clearly see Annie (the present) because of his guilt over Caroline (the past). This constitutes a state of fear. (Your analysis of the subsequent division of Cooper in WIP 53 is marvelous.)

Thanks for all your dedication and fine work.
Seofan
e-mail

Thanks for another great letter, Seofan. Technically something might be "tangible" ("palpable") without being "physical" if we're considering mental states—that is, someone could have the sensation of, say, grabbing hold of a freezing pipe, when of course

there is no actual pipe being held by any actual hand. But this ignores not only the common sense understanding of the word, but indeed the clear definition that includes "real" and "concrete." More to the point, however, Frost's understanding of "tangible" as it relates to the Red Room is that it is a physical location that can actually be entered into bodily, as opposed to the psychological/dream presentation that it had during its creation by Lynch.

We have no idea whether Lynch would subscribe to an idea of an astral/dream world being the foundation of the physical world (as opposed to the other way around), but such theories seem slippery at best. Because of the subjectivity of such psychological realities, how could they support objective, physical existence? In college, Craig sat through enough discussions

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of epistemology in philosophy classes ("Is the chair you're sitting on real? How do you know?")—and enjoyed them all—do have been around this track, and while they form fascinating intellectual games, they sometimes seem to miss the forest for the trees.

That's not to say, of course, that the Red Room isn't at least complementary to such views, and your presentation is certainly thought-provoking.

Dear WIP.

A couple of comments on the Red Room piece:

(1) You'll recall that in the shooting script for Episode #2, Cooper's dream includes all the material from the European pilot. Indeed, in Episode #3, he recalls that material, including Bob and Mike and how Mike got tired of the killing, etc. So an interesting question is, did Lynch cut material from the actual Episode #2 because he had reconsidered its relevance to his own conception, or purely out of time constraints? And while he removed the explicit reference to "25 years" from the episode as shown, the fact that he brought it back in the finale has to mean something. One wonders if he had or still has some notion of a sequel set in 2014!

(2) In the shooting script for FWWM, the Red Room is described as "Red Room of the Black Lodge," as if there were also a Red Room of the White Lodge. Perhaps this came from Robert Engels, but in the shooting script—as opposed to the film as shot—the Red Room remains a dark place, where The Man from Another Place is a sinister figure. When Cooper asks where he is and when he can leave, he says, "You are here. And there is no place to go but HOME [Does this signify death?]" There is nothing of the angels, or the transfiguration of Laura (who in the shooting script is sitting on Cooper's lap, apparently sharing his captivity but also coming on to him like the bad Laura at the Pink Room). Note also that both Mike and MFAP act like demons, treating Laura's murder as a joke. Either Lynch did a 180, or the negative vision of the script came from Engels and was scrapped by Lynch. Another reason to talk to Engels! But while the Lodges were Frost's invention, Lynch apparently went along with the idea ("The good Dale is in the Lodge"), but put his own spin on it. I think that the Red Room may lead to either the Black Lodge or the White Lodge, depending on who enters it and why—and that Lynch's idea of the supernatural (if we want to call it that) is rather pagan and animistic, as opposed to Frost's Christian-Theosophical dualism.

John J. Pierce
e-mail

You make a great point about the "twenty five years later" element that was mentioned—though not emphasized—in the WIP 54-essay. When Cooper recounts his dream to Truman and Lucy in episode 1003, he includes information that did appear in the "European ending" but did not appear in the scenes in episode 1002 (including the comment that "suddenly it was twenty-five years later"). Should the European ending be treated as canonical? Just the events that Cooper told talked about the next morning?

Dear Craig and John,

I've been waiting ten years to read an article by you guys on the final episode of *Twin Peaks*. A great analysis to a great, if incredibly underrated by the critics, episode of television.

However, regarding the superimposing of Windom Earle's face over the screaming Laura Doppelgänger, I differ with your interpretation. You write that "Earle is merely an observer...not manipulating these events, but still a gleeful spectator, reveling in Cooper's trauma." I believe Earle is manipulating the Laura Doppelgänger, possessing her, or creating the facade. In the Red Room, Laura has told Cooper she'll see him again in twenty-five years: "meanwhile"...and frames her

face with her hands and vanishes.

Okay. When Maddy sees Cooper later, she tells him to "watch out for my cousin," a yelled warning that should have made Cooper think of what Laura herself had told him—he wouldn't see her again anytime soon. So he should know that the screaming, threatening Laura is not Laura, but he is not aware of "who" this Laura "is." Lynch gives the subliminal flash of Earle's face to hint at what more clearly follows later, when the screaming Laura again appears and is "replaced" by Windom Earle. Earle was who was after him before, and though toying with him at that point, he still took pleasure at the fear he creates in a paricking Cooper. As someone has pointed out to me in the past, it's like Earle is getting into that Black Lodge thing, feeding off the garmonbozia he's creating there with a frightened Cooper. I know that "garmonbozia" as such doesn't enter the Lynchian vocabulary until *Fire Walk With Me*, but already, in the series, Earle—I believe—has pointed out that creatures like Bob "feed" on fear, terror—Earle's "favorite" emotion.
Micah Harris
e-mail

P.S.: Wanted to let you know that I've been working for years on a project entitled *Heaven's War*, with an artist who has just made a high profile debut with Marvel Comics' new book *Atlas* (no relation to the new TV show). He talks about the project a little in his interview at popmag.com. Go there, click on the Michael Gaydos interview, and you'll find the synopsis of our graphic novel and a page of art from it (if you'd like to see the page preceding the one in the article, go to MichaelGaydos.com, the artist's own Web site).

As Michael says in the interview, our depiction of Heaven is surreal, and I was in very much a Lynchian Red Room/Black Lodge mindset when describing it in the script—also, I was thinking of the rooms at the end of 2001: A Space Odyssey. Actually, we're using heaven here the way the Apostle Paul refers to it, when he talks of the "kingdom of the air," a place where good and evil angelic powers are in conflict.

Thanks for the update, Micah (whom long-time readers remember as the author of "Twin Peaks, Fairy Tales, and Rip Van Winkle" from way back in WIP 10!).

That's all the letters for this issue; be here next time for lots of reaction to Mulholland Drive. Why not add your voice to the discussion? Drop us a line!



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Magazines

TV GUIDE (May 5, 1990) - Although not cover featured, inside is an eight-page "Twin Peaks special report" that includes eight black-and-white photos. There's also a half-page Twin Peaks ad. The cover is wrinkled, but again it's not Peaks anyway. **\$10.00** (good+)

WRAPPED IN PLASTIC (#5; June 1993) - Catherine Coulson interview; Peaks/Blue Velvet connections; Peaks in Germany; and much more! 24 pages. **\$30.00** (near mint)

WRAPPED IN PLASTIC (#8; Dec. 1993) - Frank Silva (Killer Bob) cover and interview, Mark Frost interview; Peaks in France; Julie Cruise's Voice of Love reviewed; and much more. 32 pages. **\$35.00** (near mint)

WRAPPED IN PLASTIC (#12; second printing, Oct. 1994) - X-Files cover, first-season review, and Gillian Anderson interview; UFOs in Twin Peaks; MacLachlan in Roswell and The Ties; behind-the-scenes at the filming of FWWM! Our best-selling issue to date. 48 pages with a card-stock cover. **\$30.00** (near mint)

Miscellaneous Items

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THE DEVIL'S GUARD by Talbot Mundy - Rare 1968 Avon paperback novel of Jimmym's adventures in Tibet and his encounters with the Oogpas and the Black and White Lodges! The parallels to Twin Peaks are quite interesting (see the article in WIPB), and one of Windom Earle's lines of dialogue is a direct quote from the book (which was written back in 1926)! Whenever we've offered these for sale, they always go quickly; we'd recommend e-mailing or calling in advance to see if it's still in stock, because we have only one copy. **\$40.00** (vg/fine)

JULIE CRUISE "ROCKIN' BACK INSIDE MY HEART" PROMO CD - This very rare disc has two versions of the song: one from the *Flooding Into the Night* album plus another shorter version. Lynch co-wrote and produced the song (with Angelo Badalamenti), and we think even took the photos that appear on the front and back covers. A very cool collectible from 1989! **\$20** (insert card has slight wear)

LANDMARK 1992 TWIN PEAKS CALENDAR - This is the much sought after calendar published by Landmark in the fall of 1991. Twelve months worth of full-color photos! But it's not 1992, you say? Hey, in 2020 the calendar will be accurate again. Until then, just enjoy the pictures from one of the most valuable Twin Peaks collectibles. And one of the best things about this calendar is that it is mint: it is still sealed in its original shrinkwrapping! Wow! We have only one, so you might want to call or e-mail to reserve it before ordering. **\$60.00**

MERIDIAN SOUNDTRACK by Pino Donaggio - 1991 film (also known as *Kiss of the Beast*) co-stars Sherilyn Fenn in one of her more sizzling roles. Donaggio's best-known work may be his music for *Baron de Palma* (Corrie Dressed to Kill); though he also scored *Zelly & Me*, which co-starred David Lynch, but to be honest the reason to get this is for the great Fenn photos. As far as we could find out, this soundtrack is out of print. We have two of these; the booklets are in different conditions. **\$35.00** (booklet has slight wear); **\$30.00** (booklet has a couple of folds)

TWIN PEAKS: FIRE WALK WITH ME PROMO CARD - 5x7 full-color promo. It seems like we've had these forever. Well, our stock is finally starting to run low. Don't wait much longer! **\$12.00** postpaid (near mint)

WELCOME TO TWIN PEAKS - This unauthorized paperback by Scott Krickelbome was pulled from the market in 1990 and is now extremely difficult to find. Every time we find copies, they sell very quickly. We've caught a lucky streak and located a few more copies. Don't wait, or they'll probably be gone! **\$40.00** (fine), **\$35.00** (fine-), **\$32.00** (fine-); this copy is a fine-very fine except that it has an inscription on the title page, "Happy Birthday Suzanne!"

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The World Spins

(Illustration © 2001 Larry Hunt)

Bandits

Starring Bruce Willis (Joe Blake), Billy Bob Thornton (Terry Collins), Cate Blanchett (Kate Wheeler), Tray Garity (Harvey Pollard), and Bobby Slayton (Darren Head)

Directed by Barry Levinson

Written by Harley Peyton

Produced by Michael Binbaum, Michele Berk, Barry Levinson, Paula Weinstein, Ashok Amritraj, David Hoberman, and Arnold Rifkin

Executive Producers Patrick McCormick, Harley Peyton, and David Willis

Director of Photography Dante Spinotti

Production Designer Victor Kempster

Music by Christopher Young

123 minutes, 2001

In *Twin Peaks* writer/producer Harley Peyton's most high-profile project in a decade, *Bandits* has turned out to be both a popular and critical success. The feature film, directed by Barry Levinson (*Good Morning, Vietnam*; *Rain Man*; *Bugsy*; *The Natural*; *Wag the Dog*; *Homicide: Life on the Street*) and starring Bruce Willis, Billy Bob Thornton, and Cate Blanchett, arrived in theaters October 12 and provides two hours of fun—a mixture of humor, action, and clever dialogue at which Peyton is so proficient.

While Peyton's previous films were adapted from novels, *Bandits* is a completely original work, though roughly based on the lives of a couple of actual bank robbers. Wanting to rob banks with a minimal amount of risk, they decided to target locations in small towns. They would learn who the bank president is and go to his house the night before. Holding him and his family hostage until the next morning, the bandits would then arrive at the bank shortly before it opened, at which time the president would be forced to open the vault.

In Peyton's hilarious script, Joe Blake breaks out of an Oregon prison with Terry Collins, and together they run along the West coast. Joe is handsome, action-oriented, and impulsive. Terry is brilliant, but a hypochondriac who over-thinks every scenario. Individually, they would have limited success, but together they pull off a string of robberies, hoping to fund an eventual getaway to Mexico, where they will create their own personal Paradise.

Joe and Terry are joined by getaway driver Harvey, whose goal is to be a Hollywood stuntman and special effects whiz but has a hard time keeping his mind on his work and puts even less thought into his actions than Joe does; and Kate Wheeler, a bored housewife who finds excitement in life on the road with the bandits. Eventually—as these things tend to go—both Joe and Terry fall in love with her, and she falls

in love with both of them at the same time. She can't choose, because together, she argues, they form one perfect man.

The fifth prominent role is Darren Head, the host of a tabloid TV program called *Criminals at Large*. He scores a major coup when he is granted an interview with the "Sleepover Bandits" and discovers that, theft aside, the families who are held hostage end up liking the men personally. There is one great scene early on in which Joe and Terry are eating dinner with their hostages, and the mother reprimands her daughter's poor table manners in front of their "guests," then realizes what she just said.

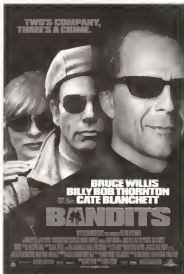
The film is full of great scenes like this. We've long praised Peyton's deftness with well-written dialogue, and *Bandits* is a cornucopia of such writing, especially in the early scenes in which Joe and Terry are by themselves. It helps that Willis and Thornton are fantastic on screen together, with a camaraderie that shines, but there's no doubt that they had good material to work with from the outset. Early on, as Joe explains his plan to create Paradise, Terry wonders about the details. "I have just one question: how do we pay for it?" Joe responds, "Well, we are bank robbers." There's a wonderful extended sequence in which Kate has hit Terry with her car. Not badly injured, he gets in the passenger seat and pulls a gun on her, trying to threaten her to drive him to a location where he's supposed to meet up with Joe. Little does he realize that she's mentally unbalanced and practically suicidal. Her insane driving through crowded streets ends up terrifying him more than his gun frightens her, to the point that he's the one begging to be let out of the car.

The first half of the film is a wild ride, as Willis and Thornton dominate the screen, and Kate's craziness frustrates the unity of the duo. As the romantic angle takes over during the second half, the energy level drops. There's nothing wrong with these scenes per se, and they turn out to be essential to the film's inventive finale, but they suffer in comparison to the first part, which is one great moment after another.

We caught *Bandits* after a week of several viewings of *Mulholland Drive*. The films have virtually nothing in common, but both are wonderful in their own ways. In fact, after working through some of the details of Lynch's bleak film (preparing notes for our feature article in the next issue of *Wrapped in Plastic*), *Bandits* turned out to be an enjoyable diversion and well worth the time. Give it a shot.

Twin Peaks DVD News

Artisan Entertainment is working furiously to complete work on the *Twin Peaks* DVDs in order to meet the December 4 release date. The four-disc set will contain episodes 1001-1007, the entire first season minus the pilot, which Warner Bros. owns



the domestic rights to. (While Warner Bros. has no plans to release the pilot. It is easily available as an all-region import disc from many sources, including eBay and www.securecrow.com. See WIP 54 for details.)

While the actual discs themselves are still a few weeks away as of this writing, we have seen the packaging, and it is extraordinary. The illustrated fold-out case (similar to The X-Files) holds the insert booklet and discs. A clear plastic cover then slips over the entire package. This cover reproduces the famous homecoming queen portrait which, when slid in place, covers the "wrapped in plastic" photo on the package, creating a metaphor for the series itself!

The back cover has small photos of Leland, Audrey, Cooper (a shot we don't remember having seen before; it may even be from the second season), and Donna. It also lists the contents: "Newly remastered high-definition transfers of the original television program. Full screen version. DTS digital surround. 5.1 Dolby digital surround. 2.0 Dolby digital surround. Interactive menus. Scene access digitally mastered. Select episode analysts by the directors. New in-depth interview with cast and crew including: series co-creator Mark Frost, writers, directors, film and television experts. Optional Log Lady introductions to each episode. Script notes: optional guide to the 'Unseen Twin Peaks.' Rare archival material from *Wrapped in Plastic*."

We don't know the specifics of what each of those items refers to. We do know that we supplied excerpts from our "Unseen Twin Peaks" articles for use on the discs, and we also conducted a new interview with Mark Frost for the DVD. See this issue's interview with Harley Peyton for his comments about supplying audio commentary for the third and sixth episodes.

The set has a suggested retail price of \$59.98, though no doubt many online and electronics stores will offer it at a discount. Next issue we will have our full review of the set.

More Lynch on Shiny Disc

Second Sight's British DVD release of *Twin Peaks: Fire Walk With Me* exemplifies the notion of a bare-bones disc. Without even a trailer to boost its value, the disc can only be judged on the quality of its film presentation and, unfortunately, picture quality is largely indifferent. To add insult to injury, the actual print used shows distinct signs of wear and tear. Like other British releases of the film, the disc does not contain subtitles during, for example, the nightclub scene. Perhaps the disc's saving grace is that Second Sight has seen fit to encode it as Region 0, meaning that anyone unable to bear the wait for the much vaunted Region 1 disc should find that this disc will play on their machine without problems. Great cover artwork though.

More impressive is an Australian R4 version of *Lost Highway* (Siren Visual Entertainment) which will happily play on European R2 DVD machines. Aside from a generally excellent transfer, the disc also contains over thirty minutes of additional behind-the-scenes and interview material, although not the film trailers or actor biographies promised on the cover. Sourced from what may be the film's electronic press kit, much of the material is familiar (e.g. Lynch and Badalamenti recording the score in Prague) but other items, such as Deepak Nayar talking about the production process or Patricia Norris explaining the film's costume design were new, at least to this viewer.

—Douglas Baptie

Et Cetera

Mike Mettler, longtime WIP subscriber, is the Editor-in-Chief of Mobile Entertainment magazine in New York and a contributor to its sister publication, *Sound & Vision* (formerly *Stereo Review*). Mettler has done a brief write-up on WIP for the October issue (the one with Princess Amida on the cover). It appears on the last page in a feature called "S&V Picks" and includes color reproductions of the covers of WIP 49 and 50. Thanks, Mike!

Douglas Baptie informs us that the November issue of *Empire*



magazine features a five page interview with David Lynch. During the article Lynch reveals that *Mulholland Drive* was originally planned as a "kind of spin-off of *Twin Peaks*," which is a little hard to believe. (Not that *Empire* wrote it, but that Lynch was being serious.)

The September/October issue of *Film Comment* has a *Mulholland Drive* cover and a couple of interesting essays about the film inside.

Kiefer Sutherland, whom *Twin*

Peaks fans know as FBI agent Sam Stanley in *Fire Walk With Me*, stars in 24, one of the Fox network shows that's been getting a lot of positive advance publicity. We're certainly looking forward to it. The show is featured on the cover of the November 3 TV Guide.

Charlotte Stewart's movie *Tremors 3: Back to Perfection*, appeared on DVD on October 2.



X-Files returns for a 9th season!



Entertainment Weekly 294



Rolling Stone 734



TV Guide 3/11/95



TV Guide 4/5/95



TV Guide 11/15/97

Supply limited! (Magazine conditions in parentheses.)

DETAILS (Oct. 95) - Hard-to-find issue with a Duchovny cover and 7-page article/ interview, plus several new photos! (near mint) \$20

DREAMWATCH 22 (June 1996) - Full-color brush-off mag! Anderson cover, seven pages devoted to *FX*, including a three-page article on Anderson's *FIM* magazine photo shoot (see WP 27). This issue also includes two separate, full-color "card prints" 18.25" x 11.75", of Duchovny and Anderson. The publisher is sold out, but we still have a few copies! (fine) \$20

DREAMWATCH 28 (December 1996) - Nice Duchovny/Anderson cover. Inside are thirteen pages of *FX* news, articles, and interviews. Another packed issue! (fine) \$8

ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY 294 (Sept. 26, 1995) - Duchovny cover! Inside is a six-page article with new photos. (fine/near mint) \$25

ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY 355 (Nov. 25, 1995) - Spectacular *FX* cover. Inside is a 23-page article with numerous character profiles, articles, photos, and much more. A very nice package! (near mint) \$15

ROLLING STONE 734 (May 16, 1996) - This is the U.S. edition (not the Australian one)! Inside is a review of the *Songs in the Key of X* albums, interviews with Duchovny, Anderson, and Carter, and some cool photos! (near mint) \$30

SCI-FI UNIVERSE 9 (August 1995) - 15-page *FX* article includes a long essay (with numerous quotes from Carter and others), followed by an episode guide for the first two seasons. Supply very low! (very good/fine) \$22

SHIVERS 24 (Dec. 1995) - *X*-Files cover and several articles, including a Nicholas Lea interview, the making of "Ice," "Colony," and "End Game," and more! The publisher is sold out, but we still have a few copies. (near mint) \$20

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TV GUIDE 7/11/96 (Canadian Edition) - Special double-cover edition, one with Anderson, another with Duchovny! Inside is a 4-page article on the movie, a 5 1/2-page episode guide checklist of the first five seasons, and a page of misc. *FX* facts. A really nice issue! (near mint) \$20 for the set of two!

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TV Guide 5/17/97

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TV GUIDE 11/15/97 - Anderson, Carter, and Duchovny are on the cover; inside is a five- and a half-page article on the *X*-Files movie, plus a fold-out poster of some *FX* artwork. (fine/near mint) \$6

TV GUIDE 6/26/98 - Special double-cover edition, one with Anderson and one with Duchovny. Inside is an 8-page article on the movie, including a 3-page interview with Chris Carter! (near mint) \$10 for the set of two!

More X-Files Material! Our own SPECTRUM magazines also contain major *X*-Files articles and interviews, and WRAPPED IN PLASTIC 13-up contain "X-Files Extra" news sections. See pages 32-33!

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X-Files Extra!

Let's face it, there hasn't been a lot of *X-Files*-related news recently. Reruns have been airing; the season premiere is still a week away as we write this; and neither David Duchovny or Gillian Anderson are currently appearing in a film. We were going to catch up on the various magazine and television appearances of the actors from the past few months, but when the interviews started flooding in for this and the next issue of WIP, it left us little time to assemble and catalog those *X-Files* appearances. So we shifted to Plan B: find out what Fox itself was saying about the upcoming *X-Files* season, and the season premiere that guest stars Lucy Lawless, whom we've been watching for years as the star of *Xena: Warrior Princess*. It's a two-part premiere that we're really looking forward to, and next issue we'll have a full review. For now, though, we'll turn the rest of this page over to the Fox publicity gang—with rather substantial editing/rewriting by us. If nothing else, it gives us an excuse to run the great photo of Lawless with Anderson and Annabeth Gish!



Monica Reyes (Annabeth Gish), Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson), and Shannon McMahon (Lucy Lawless)

Lucy Lawless and Cary Elwes join *The X-Files*

In part one of the two-part season premiere, "Nothing Important Happened Today" in great title, by the way, Scully is forced to face the question of why the aliens don't take her baby, who was born in last season's finale.

Last season, readers may recall, Scully and Doggett investigated the alien abduction of Mulder and successfully saved him from a fate that would have placed him under alien control. As the threat of an alien invasion increased, Scully dealt with the questions surrounding her inexplicable pregnancy and the potential link her unborn child may have to the extraterrestrial conspiracy.

In the show's season finale Scully gave birth to a son, and a potential alien conspiracy with ties to the FBI was confirmed. While the role of the FBI's involvement in the conspiracy is questioned, Scully, Doggett, assistant director Skinner, and Reyes are forced to keep secrets—even from each other—while their relationships with one another are challenged and the roles of skeptic and believer have turned.

In the ninth season premiere airing November 11, agents Doggett and Reyes move forward in their attempts to find proof that Mulder's theories and suspicions were actually correct, even though the agents are warned off investigating further FBI connections to a possible alien conspiracy by assistant director Brad Follmer (guest star Cary Elwes). Their investigation leads them to the mysterious Shannon McMahon (guest star Lucy Lawless), who holds clues to a shocking government cover-up with possible ties to Scully's baby and the FBI.

In the conclusion that airs the following week, "Nothing Important Happened Today II," Scully's baby is showing signs of being extraordinary, and questions are raised about the child's connection to a government conspiracy. Doggett searches for clues, and his life is both threatened and saved by McMahon, while Reyes continues the battle back at the FBI, keeping an eye on the potentially double-dealing Follmer.

Both episodes were written by creator and executive producer Chris Carter and executive producer Frank Spotnitz.

None of the advance press material addresses the question that is most on everyone's mind: what will happen to Fox Mulder? Because David Duchovny has ended his association with the series, the producers have to provide some explanation as to why Mulder has left Scully by herself in this extremely trying time for her. Presumably this explanation will come in the episode itself....

Mulder or no Mulder, the addition of Lucy Lawless to the cast has to be considered a coup. The show needed to inject some excitement, and Lawless may be just the thing. Not only does she have an immense following because of her work on *Xena*, but she has proven to be an accomplished actress. Lawless will appear in the first two episodes of the show's ninth season, with additional episodes to be determined. Details regarding Lawless' character, in true *X-Files* form, were being closely kept under wraps.

Commenting on the casting of Lawless, Frank Spotnitz, executive producer of *The X-Files*, said, "We're thrilled to have an opportunity to work with Lucy, whose work we're admired for a long time. We think we've found an interesting and unexpected way to have her join *The X-Files* family."

New Zealand native Lawless' breakout role of Lysia in *Hercules and the Amazon*

Women led to her signature role of Xena in three episodes of *Hercules: The Legendary Journeys*. Shortly thereafter those episodes led to her own spin-off series, *Xena: Warrior Princess*, which aired internationally for six years. Her other television credits include guest roles on *The Simpsons* and *Just Shoot Me*. She has also hosted *Saturday Night Live*.

By the way, *The X-Files* will be pre-empted Sunday, November 25 for the North American television premiere of *Star Wars: Episode I—The Phantom Menace*.



David Duchovny makes the cover of the July issue of Orange Coast, "the magazine of Orange county" (California).



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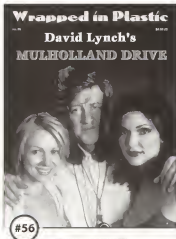


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